

# Public Question Register

	Name	Location	Topic	Committee	Date	Answer Provided By
913	Councillor B Durkin	Herefordshire Council	Budget	Council	08/12/2021	Cabinet Member - Finance and Corporate Services and planning

Text of question	Text of Answer
<p>The Council made a loss of £4.9m on its trading operations in the last financial year 2020/21, compared with a profit of £2.2m the previous year. Will the Cabinet member agree that her previous statement “we do not have to make a profit” is one which she is being spectacularly successful at delivering?</p>	<p>I would like to thank Cllr Durkin for taking a keen interest in the Council’s set of Annual Accounts. Something less intrepid members might find a touch dry for their liking.</p> <p>For anyone as fearless of the figures as Cllr Durkin, the detail of the Trading Operations of the Council’s Markets, Industrial and Retail property portfolio can be found on page 69 of the published 2020/21 Annual Accounts which are located here on the council’s website: <a href="https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/downloads/download/2155/council-accounts-202021">https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/downloads/download/2155/council-accounts-202021</a></p> <p>This section of the accounts comprises a breakdown of the income, expenditure and any movements in the valuation of the asset portfolio for each trading group. For information, I reproduce below the movements over the last 5 years in asset value for each trading group alongside the net income/expenditure position and the overall trading position.</p> <p>From this it is clear that in recent years the council’s property investment portfolio trades in profit (Expenditure + Income) each year to the tune of in excess of £2m. Whilst the council is not required to make a profit to pass on to shareholders this trading profit is real money coming in each year which is used to support service delivery across the council. I would like to offer my congratulations to our officers for their ‘spectacular success’ in maintaining this level of trading profit throughout this year of Covid.</p>

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	<p>The year-on-year fluctuations in overall trading performance come mainly from changes in the assessed value of the property portfolio which is revalued each year. These portfolio adjustments are important to understand in the context of managing the portfolio to deliver value across the range of measures we use to ensure publicly owned assets are working hard for the people of Herefordshire to whom they all belong.</p> <p>However, the 2020/21 downward adjustment in portfolio value reflects the levels of economic risk and uncertainty caused by the coincidence of Brexit and the Covid pandemic. That said, we must also acknowledge the level of national concern has been raised regarding the accuracy of such valuations in these particularly troubled and uncertain times. Only time will ultimately tell if the undoubtedly negative impact of these national and global challenges is long-lived.</p>
<p><b>Text of Supplementary Question (if any)</b></p>	<p><b>Text of Answer to Supplementary</b></p>

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	<b>Name</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Committee</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Answer Provided By</b>
912	Councillor N Shaw	Herefordshire Council	Maylord shopping centre	Council	08/12/2021	Cabinet Member - Commissioning, procurement and assets

<b>Text of question</b>	<b>Text of Answer</b>
One year after the Maylord shopping centre lease was purchased by this Administration for £4.2m the external auditor has devalued the site by £5.9m. Would the Cabinet member agree that though Maylord Street used to feature a White Lion, it now features a different, much bigger, white creature of her own making, on which she is apparently spending an additional £700,000 this year?	A response to this question will follow shortly.
<b>Text of Supplementary Question (if any)</b>	<b>Text of Answer to Supplementary</b>

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	Name	Location	Topic	Committee	Date	Answer Provided By
911	Councillor C A Gandy	Herefordshire Council	Covid 19 Recovery related grant funding	Council	08/12/2021	Cabinet Member - Finance and Corporate Services and planning

Text of question	Text of Answer
<p>Does the Cabinet Member for Finance join with me in welcoming the Covid 19 Recovery related grant funding provided by the Conservative government which has enabled this authority to make available £15 to every household in the county to spend in local shops?</p>	<p>Of course I am very grateful for any and all funding provided by the current Conservative government. Short-term and one-off funding is always better than no funding at all and this administration is doing its utmost to use these funds in innovative and ground-breaking new ways through our Covid19 Economic Recovery Plan to give a rapid boost to economic, community wellbeing and organisational recovery in all communities across Herefordshire. The Shop Local scheme is only one element in the comprehensive support package approved by Cabinet to aid the local recovery. Other projects currently underway include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Revive and Thrive - grant support to new retail and commercial ventures</li> <li>• additional funding for this administration's continued support to the visitor economy left languishing by the Conservatives. Our investment in strategic destination marketing and our Visit Herefordshire brand awareness campaign has reached over 8.3m TV viewers and over 1m social media impressions</li> <li>• free weekend bus travel within the county – hopefully for a whole year</li> <li>• and, most recently, Welcome Back and Great Places to Visit grants of up to £110,000 passed to Market Town Councils to pump prime improvements at the most local of levels</li> </ul> <p>What would be even more welcome would be for Cllr Gandy and her Conservative Party colleagues to encourage their Westminster</p>

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	<p>masters to address the systemic and strategic funding issues for local government of which they have been the architects. Issues such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Addressing the iniquities in the present local government funding formulas which has Herefordshire at the bottom end of every county council funding indicator</li> <li>• Getting on with gripping the real issue of adequately funding social care rather than capping the amount the better off have to pay while leaving the less well-off still selling their homes to pay for care in old age</li> <li>• Revaluing and broadening the council tax banding system to distribute the burden of local taxation in a fairer and more equitable manner</li> <li>• Funding rural and borderland authorities to reflect the funding and operational disadvantages inherent in our positions</li> <li>• Tackling the crisis in public transport to improve sustainability, resilience and choice.</li> </ul> <p>Whether or not this Conservative Government acts to address these Westminster-made problems, this administration will continue to ensure that the funds provided by central government are used to provide a catalyst for positive change for Herefordshire residents at a community and household level.</p> <p>What we shall not be doing is acting upon the very recent suggestions of Conservative Ministers that this money is syphoned-off to offset their own persistent refusal to adequately fund the recovery from the county's serious flood damage and the consequential major road repairs.</p>
<b>Text of Supplementary Question (if any)</b>	<b>Text of Answer to Supplementary</b>

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	<b>Name</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Committee</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Answer Provided By</b>
910	Councillor A Seldon	Herefordshire Council	Bromyard Roads	Council	08/12/2021	Cabinet Member - Infrastructure and Transport

<b>Text of question</b>	<b>Text of Answer</b>
<p>It is well known that during periods of extreme adverse weather, all roads into Bromyard can become impassable very quickly. The site of the Highways Depot on the Hereford Road in Bromyard has been unused for at least four years with its infrastructure reasonably intact. Following the failure of the Planning Application on the site, will the Cabinet Member instruct BBLP to station at least one gritting machine and a stock of grit on the site? This will stop the current situation where employees of BBLP have to drive to Kingsland, pick up a machine and grit then drive back to Bromyard.</p>	<p>The councils Winter Service Plan sets out how the council manages the county highway network through the winter period. In managing the network the council operates a fleet of gritters which treat precautionary routes and in times of heavy frost and/or snow, treat the priority routes and secondary routes.</p> <p>I understand the logic of Cllr Seldon's question and admire his continued advocacy for the best interest of his residents but it is felt we cannot station a valuable asset at one depot to support one town when the optimal Winter Service Plan means teams and fleet are managed, supervised and supported to ensure the appropriate resources are available for the planned activities across the entire network . The fleet needs to be maintained, fueled, cleaned, mechanical and maintenance checks undertaken and the vehicles loaded using the appropriate vehicle, this requires the service to operate from fully operational depots.</p> <p>I can give assurance the team will respond to any additional requests for gritting deemed appropriate.</p>
<b>Text of Supplementary Question (if any)</b>	<b>Text of Answer to Supplementary</b>
<p>Thank you to the Cabinet Member for his response. However, he seems to think that my question relates only to the Town of Bromyard. Given the distances involved when gritting priority routes around the North East of the County, would it not be sensible</p>	

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to reopen the depot to prevent excessive and unnecessary mileage being racked up by staff? As I stated in the original question, the infrastructure at the Bromyard Depot is reasonably intact.	
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	Name	Location	Topic	Committee	Date	Answer Provided By
909	Mr J Emmett	Hereford	Planning and enviroment	Council	08/12/2021	Cabinet Member - Finance and Corporate Services and planning

Text of question	Text of Answer
<p>Our recent Press Release about the state of our rivers highlighted a lack of regulation and co-ordination over the placement and number of intensive poultry units (IPUs). How confident are the Council that we are avoiding the same lack of planning and impact management on the issue of housing across the county; what assurances are there that the quality of these homes aren't sacrificed in favour of quantity? Whilst we favour social and affordable housing, Herefordshire deserves a high environmental standards in both food and housing.</p>	<p>I would like to thank Mr Emmett for his question. As an administration we are confident that the law will require improved environmental standards in the very near future and we are committed to ensuring that in Herefordshire new development of all types is of the highest environmental quality.</p> <p>As regards housing and buildings developed by the council itself, the Council approved the Herefordshire Future Homes Report in September this year, and adopted the environmental building design standards for future housing developments on council-owned land and council retrofit schemes. The Council is continuing to progress plans to build more affordable homes in the county and we intend that these shall be both affordable to buy AND to live in because they will also be designed to net zero-carbon standards.</p> <p>For developer-led housing we remain constrained to operate within the Local Plan policy framework adopted back in 2015, which is far less ambitious as regards building standards than this administration is today. Therefore we will also shortly consult upon an emerging Environmental Building Standards Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) to sit alongside the Local Plan. This SPD is being developed within the context of national and local Net Zero Carbon targets and will provide detail on what is to be required from developers so as to deliver high quality construction whilst we are undertaking a significant update to the Local Plan planning policy framework. The SPD will also look to address and improve other</p>

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	<p>environmental issues such as biodiversity and resilience to climate change.</p> <p>Our preparation of an updated Local Plan for the county will also enable the highest possible environmental standards to be embedded within the new plan's revised suite of statutory planning policies. In updating and extending our Local Plan we shall take care to consider the most appropriate locations for all forms of development so that as the county continues to grow it does so from now on in a sustainable and resilient manner. We aim to have this plan ready for public examination by the end of 2022.</p>
<p><b>Text of Supplementary Question (if any)</b></p>	<p><b>Text of Answer to Supplementary</b></p>
<p>• On the path to carbon neutral, what is the Council doing to address the national scandal of many new homes being constructed with inadequate insulation, will you ensure new housing has sufficient, sustainable infrastructure, including transport, health, education, recreation and green space. Finally is the Council using accurate scientific data from a wide range of sources to inform about the environmental impacts - near and far - of proposed housing developments?</p>	

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	<b>Name</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Committee</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Answer Provided By</b>
908	Mr P McKay	Leominster	PROW	Council	08/12/2021	Cabinet Member - Infrastructure and Transport

<b>Text of question</b>	<b>Text of Answer</b>
<p>With bringing PROW back in-house under consideration will this include a 'Project 2026' to review and update the Definitive Map and Statement published 1989 that is long overdue consolidation as detailed in the BBLP 2020-21 Annual Plan presently being an Unresourced Project, with the DM Statements and the digitised 1950's Parish Schedules of Information viewable online, enabling the individual research required to resolve the large numbers of known anomalies to both the Definitive Map and other highway records as referenced by BBLP, and prospective Restricted Byways you become aware of, to be shared with the Parishes and the Public in a planned and informed manner by 2026, after which this may become more complex ?</p>	<p>The current priority is to ensure the efficient and effective transfer of the service from BBLP to the Council by April 2022. Following the insourcing of the service, the Council will be developing a service improvement plan to identify projects that can improve service delivery and the resources necessary to deliver these. Consideration will then be given to the available funding for service improvements and which projects are the highest priority for the Council. Officers will ensure Mr McKay's request is considered as part of that process at the appropriate time.</p>
<b>Text of Supplementary Question (if any)</b>	<b>Text of Answer to Supplementary</b>
<p>Addressing this issue, with known anomalies, having been an Unresourced Project for a number of years, will you consider asking Government to defer the 2026 date when unrecorded ways will be extinguished should you also require more time?</p>	

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	<b>Name</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Committee</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Answer Provided By</b>
907	Ms E Westmacott	Ross-on-Wye	Waste Collection	Council	08/12/2021	Cabinet Member - Commissioning, procurement and assets

<b>Text of question</b>	<b>Text of Answer</b>
<p>Can the council please explain what allowances/arrangements are being made for those people living in flats/bedsits, small houses with little or no room to store refuse for up to 3 weeks and in many cases do not have outside space for bins?</p>	<p>Thank you for your question, as the cabinet report of the 25th November 2021 outlines, all residents will be provided with the core twin stream recycling and food waste collection service. However we know this will be difficult for people living in flats. Special consideration will be given to the service provided to those residents living in flats. We will be commencing a project to complete a full audit of flat developments in the county to assess the suitability of the current facilities to incorporate the new collection service. Pilot projects will be established to assess collection options for flats. Through the project we will be working with landlords, residents groups and owner occupiers of flats to develop, as far as is possible, a differentiated service (or services) for them.</p> <p>As we already do, we will also be considering collection options for those residents with limited outside storage space, such as no garden, who could opt out of the garden waste collection service where space is limited too.</p> <p>To meet the challenges Herefordshire faces from climate change, I am afraid there are not always easy solutions, through our consultation on the changes we know that residents support more measures to help them reduce, reuse and recycle and we want to</p>

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	ensure that residents living in flats and smaller properties are not excluded from the opportunity to do this.
<b>Text of Supplementary Question (if any)</b>	<b>Text of Answer to Supplementary</b>

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	Name	Location	Topic	Committee	Date	Answer Provided By
906	Mr A Edge	Hereford	countywide highways and public realm maintenance work	Council	08/12/2021	Cabinet Member - Finance and Corporate Services and planning

Text of question	Text of Answer
<p>Can Council explain on what basis council funds for the maintenance of Parks, Council maintained roads, pavements and other public pathways covered by Statute and various Highways Acts are split between the City of Hereford and the other major County Towns- Leominster, Ledbury, Ross, and Bromyard. For example, is it based on rateable domestic and business rates, size of area population- however designated, or is it simply an arbitrary decision of a Council department; are there any financial accounts (audited or non-audited) related to each of the Towns and City published for these costs, available for public scrutiny?</p>	<p>First may I thank Mr Edge for his question, which is one that puzzles and interests many people and which I very much welcome. The prioritisation of countywide highways and public realm maintenance work and the consequent annual allocation of what funding we receive from central government and from income sources such as council owned car parks, is undertaken by applying the asset management approach specified by the Department for Highways and Transportation.</p> <p>The Council's Highway Infrastructure Asset Management Policy, Strategy and Transport Asset Management Plan (TAMP) documents – which are available online - communicate the detail of this approach. This process has been developed in accordance with key national guidance and codes of practice documents published by the UK Roads Liaison Group:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Highway Infrastructure Asset Management Guidance (May 2013);</li> <li>• Well Managed Highway Infrastructure Assets – Code of Practice (Oct. 2016); and...</li> </ul> <p>...uses the results of condition surveys, inspections and the maintenance requirement for parks, open space and green infrastructure such as verges and trees.</p> <p>The prioritisation of identified highways works to receive funding takes account of road classification (A, B, C &amp; U), which is generally</p>

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indicative of usage and maintenance need. However it is recognised that, due to the geography of the county some lower classified roads do have higher use than the assessment model would normally assume. Therefore adjustments are made to the national network classification to account for this reality on the ground which then results in a more accurate Herefordshire Network Hierarchy. This network picture is overlaid with the information gathered regarding priorities and strategic importance – e.g. value for money, whole life cost, safety issues, condition, safety inspections. The number of public enquiries and number of potholes reported are also taken into account at this stage and together this information results in a prioritised listing of highway maintenance and public realm schemes. It is important that we follow this structured method because it has an impact on the amount of funding we then receive from the Department of Transport (DoT) which rewards highways authorities that follow their approved asset management process with slightly higher funding allocations and penalise those that don't. Over the last 5 years between 2016/17 to 2020/21, Herefordshire has been assessed as operating at the highest Tier 3 level of DoT funding. The priorities for the Annual Maintenance Plan and Forward Investment Plan are developed with input from stakeholders such as Town, Parish Councils and County Council Ward Members. The funding allocation from central government is never sufficient to cover more than a fraction of the work which actually needs doing, which places even greater emphasis on the importance of the council sticking to this methodical asset management approach. The Maintenance and Investment Plans are formally agreed and published online each year, and progress in their delivery is tracked throughout the year. Between now and Christmas your ward members are being consulted on the draft plans for 2022.

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<b>Text of Supplementary Question (if any)</b>	<b>Text of Answer to Supplementary</b>



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	Name	Location	Topic	Committee	Date	Answer Provided By
905	Mr M Lockie	Hereford	Fastershire contract	Council	08/12/2021	Cabinet Member - Environment, Economy and Skills

Text of question	Text of Answer
<p>Can Herefordshire County Council explain why the Fastershire contract has failed in its objective to provide fast fibre to the most isolated internet users in Herefordshire, who in HCC is responsible for oversight of the Fastershire relationship, and what is the Council is doing to ensure that Fastershire delivers as promised?</p> <p>I speak as a resident of Donnington, Herefordshire where no fibre connections have been provided by BT or Gigaclear to any property, the promise of provision by Gigaclear has been broken, and even if provided there will remain some residents unconnected because of restrictions to the Gigaclear contract with Fastershire.</p> <p>Promises and publicity about Herefordshire joining the modern internet world ring very hollow to Donnington residents forced to exist on the old, decaying, copper telephony local loop supplied post-war by the GPO.</p>	<p>The current superfast broadband coverage is 93% of premises in the county, this is compared to the figure in 2012 at the start of the Fastershire broadband project of 0.6% (independent figures available from <a href="http://www.thinkbroadband.com">www.thinkbroadband.com</a>). Over the next few years coverage is due to increase as more homes are reached with fibre broadband. Unfortunately 1.24% premises in the county currently have less than 2Mbps, and reaching of these premises is challenging and costly due to being remote or at a distance from existing telecommunication infrastructure such as an broadband cabinet or the backhaul fibre network.</p> <p>For the properties that have access to less than 10Mbps broadband speed, universal service obligation (USO) exist to provide 'decent' broadband for eligible premises via BT.</p> <p>The Fastershire project was established due to commercial operators not providing superfast broadband in areas because of the limited return on investment due to the cost being so high. The council decided to use its own capital investment which is match funded by national government, with the project operating in partnership with Gloucestershire County Council to share revenue costs and use strength in numbers to attract suppliers. The council does not feel the project has failed with the coverage rising fast from a low base making a significant difference to many businesses and households. Unfortunately there are still some gaps in coverage to due to suppliers not bidding to cover those areas despite public subsidy.</p>

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	<p>The project had a recent setback as Gigaclear pulled out of coverage for 2,324 premises with less than 30Mbps in the south of the county. This is documented in a decision made on 18 November 2021, that in summary transfers the households and businesses affected by the Gigaclear withdrawal to be part of the government's Project Gigabit programme with added investment in the county. Gigaclear will complete their already started delivery in the north of the county with their own additional investment.</p> <p>Two households in Donnington (based on postcodes) have registered for the council's Community Broadband Scheme which was introduced to address gaps in coverage. Part of the decision of 18 November (published on the council website) was to increase the value of subsidy per household from £5k to £7k in order to address the problem of suppliers not bidding to cover hard-to-reach areas due to cost. Based on this uplift premises in Donnington will be reviewed within the parameters of cost and the number of premises.</p> <p>I sympathise enormously with the households that have still not been reached by faster broadband, and want to assure you that as a council we are doing everything we can to address the market failures that have created this situation.</p>
<p><b>Text of Supplementary Question (if any)</b></p>	<p><b>Text of Answer to Supplementary</b></p>
<p>Who is the HCC Councillor taking the lead on managing the Fastershire contract ? (We've never received answers to emails sent to Fastershire and I have asked for help from our county councillor, Helen L'Anson, but not yet received a response.) Now that the Gigaclear contract for South Herefordshire has been abandoned, can we in Donnington be assured that the replacement Project Gigabit contract will include not just the properties covered by</p>	

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<p>the defunct Gigaclear contract, but also the two properties that Gigaclear refused to cover ? (I've exercised the USO option: BT quoted £70k-£100k for a connection, and EE confirmed they cannot provide an acceptable broadband service via cellphone.)</p>	
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	Name	Location	Topic	Committee	Date	Answer Provided By
904	Ms A Attfield	Bromyard	process for Council Committees to vet co-optees	Council	08/12/2021	Cabinet Member - Finance and Corporate Services and planning

Text of question	Text of Answer
<p>What is the process for Council Committees to vet co-optees, and how would concerns (in particular safeguarding / security concerns) from members of the public / Councillors about co-optees be dealt with as part of the process?</p>	<p>The standards of conduct required to be a co-optee are set out in the Council's co-optee scheme under section 3.2 <a href="#">Co-optee protocol</a> In certain circumstances co-optees may be asked to complete a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check. Thereafter their conduct is subject to the Nolan principles and the Council's Code of Conduct. Any concerns raised regarding the suitability or behaviour of a co-optee will be considered by the Monitoring Officer and any formal complaints raised will be considered under our arrangements for dealing with Code of Conduct complaints in the same manner as they are for elected members.</p>
Text of Supplementary Question (if any)	Text of Answer to Supplementary
<p>I have recently signed up to be a volunteer with the Art Gallery and Museum service and had to go through a bit of a process including references and such but from what I understand from the Council's response to my question (and I have to say I find this quite astonishing), there is no process in place at all to vet co-optees to Council Committees (including the SACRE Committee) before they take up post; instead the default is an assumption as to their suitability and unless someone happens to come across their name and raise a question at any time, the co-optee will simply be, and continue to be</p>	

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accepted which means that having had no prior vetting at all - no references, no background checks, no safeguarding (except for certain roles) or security checks - they will be in a position to influence the work of a Council Committee?	
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	Name	Location	Topic	Committee	Date	Answer Provided By
903	Mr T Dixon	Shropshire	air pollution	Council	08/12/2021	Cabinet Member - housing, regulatory services, and community safety

Text of question	Text of Answer
<p>Given the return of major traffic congestion to pre-pandemic levels in central Hereford, and the absence of even a medium term prospect of a by-pass, what steps if any has the Council taken to monitor and assess air pollution on the main traffic routes in the city AND the adjoining residential roads?</p>	<p>Herefordshire Council has been monitoring air quality in the City for many years. We monitor air quality (particulates and nitrogen dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>)) using a 'continuous ambient air-quality monitoring system', which is located adjacent to Victoria Street in Hereford. We have also been monitoring NO<sub>2</sub> from a number of diffusion tubes at roadside locations around the City for an even longer period. These test tube type samples are analysed monthly and enable us to report statistically viable annual averages for NO<sub>2</sub> at each of the locations. Test results from diffusion tube samples are published on the Council website, together with an annual 'Air Quality Status Report' which considers all new monitoring data in relation to the national Air Quality Objectives. Published air quality documents and data can be found at the Herefordshire Council website: <a href="https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/downloads/download/67/air_quality_documents">https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/downloads/download/67/air_quality_documents</a> Herefordshire Council have also set aside capital money that will be invested in modernising Hereford City's continuous air quality monitoring station over the coming financial year.</p>
Text of Supplementary Question (if any)	Text of Answer to Supplementary



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	Name	Location	Topic	Committee	Date	Answer Provided By
901	Mr J Milln	Hereford	Council 20mph Motion	Cabinet	25/11/2021	Cabinet Member - Infrastructure and Transport

Text of question	Text of Answer
<p>In the 20 months since Council passed Cllr Norman's 20mph Motion (6th March 2020), numerous local authorities – both urban and rural - such as Hampshire, Calderdale, Cheshire West &amp; Chester, Scottish Borders, Lancashire and Merton have moved ahead with area wide adoption, recognising the benefits for public health, active travel, and the reduction of accidents and emissions. Edinburgh's 20mph-based safer streets plan is a prime example of how many are moving forward with this popular and progressive policy  <a href="https://www.livingstreetsedinburgh.org.uk/2021/11/17/slower-speeds-safer-streets-for-edinburgh-an-action-plan/">https://www.livingstreetsedinburgh.org.uk/2021/11/17/slower-speeds-safer-streets-for-edinburgh-an-action-plan/</a>            The Welsh Government's 20mph steering group has invited cross-border collaboration from us and we may slip stream a scheme in Hay extending into neighbouring Cusop. However may I ask what our own future programme is for area-wide 20mph given the results of our 20 month period of investigation?</p>	<p>I support the ideal of aiming for a lower speeds in towns and villages across Herefordshire, although, I have to be realistic in that the level of resources the council has. Regrettably, we do not have the resources to implement fully engineered self-enforcing speed limits across the County.</p> <p>The introduction of area wide 20mph limits without traffic calming as suggested by the 2020 Council motion is potentially a more affordable option for the Council to implement. Unfortunately, due to current resource constraints officers have not been able to progress an investigation into area wide 20mph limits. However, officers are working with colleagues from Powys on a 20 mph limits at Cusop (Hay on Wye) and Presteigne and we are also implementing a 20mph limit at Pembridge at the end of February 2022.</p> <p>This will allow us to evaluate the effects at a local level, as the national 20mph Research Study by Atkins, AECOM and Professor Mike Maher (UCL) published by the DfT in November 2018 shows that the outcome of signed limits whilst positive and worthwhile, may not be as significant as communities might expect. The study found:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Public support for 20mph (signed only) limits but concern about non-compliance</li> <li>– Minor changes in driven speeds: median speed fell 0.7mph in residential areas and 0.9mph in city centre areas</li> <li>– Faster drivers reduced speed more: 1.1mph and 1.6mph respectively (85th %ile)</li> </ul>



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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Road characteristics have a much larger impact on driven speeds than whether the road has a 30mph or 20mph limit</li> <li>– No significant change in short term in collisions and casualties in the majority of case studies</li> <li>– The majority of people have not noticed a reduction in the speed of vehicles, and do not perceive there to be fewer vehicles driving at excessive speeds</li> <li>– Small increase in use of active travel modes; mode shift cannot be determined from data.</li> </ul> <p>Notwithstanding the above, I feel that a rolling programme of area wide 20 mph limits without traffic calming in our towns and major villages could be very beneficial for our communities especially as advances in vehicle technology such as Intelligent Speed Assistance system (ISA) are likely to increase the levels of compliance with speed limits.</p> <p>Therefore, I have asked officers to prioritise commissioning a study to identify the potential outcomes, practicality, and costs of introducing a rolling programme 20 mph speed limits across the county, as signed only limits, from the 2022 Public Realm Annual Plan so that an informed decision can be made on whether or not it is practical and value for money to take the project forward.</p>
<p><b>Text of Supplementary Question (if any)</b></p>	<p><b>Text of Answer to Supplementary</b></p>
<p>I thank Councillor Harrington for his reply confirming that he will ask the executive to investigate area wide 20 mph as agreed by Council following Cllr Norman’s motion 20 months ago. However many would say we have already enough evidence and experience to proceed as other local authorities are doing. The National 20’s Plenty Organisation 20’s Plenty for Us (20splenty.org) have, at no cost, kindly offered to run a briefing/training session for officers and</p>	<p>The cabinet member confirmed that the council was commissioning a piece of work to look at this. He did not agree that there was already enough experience and evidence and stressed that any work done on speed limits needed to be done in an evidential and process-driven way. He agreed that the national 20s plenty organisation was fantastic and would take up their offer to help the council’s officers and members explore the practicalities and costs.</p>

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members to explain the practicalities and costs. Would Cllr Harrington agree to this?	
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	Name	Location	Topic	Committee	Date	Answer Provided By
900	Mr C Perryman	Hereford	Waste Management Strategy	Cabinet	25/11/2021	Cabinet Member - Commissioning, procurement and assets

Text of question	Text of Answer
<p>Can I ask what cities the council have looked at and which they have visited to further best practice? Models are already up and running in many areas which could be adopted or modified to allow us to recycle more.</p>	<p>As part of the cross party Strategic Waste Review undertaken by General Scrutiny Committee, members and officers undertook a review of the service models at numerous other local authorities to ensure that the review considered and learnt from best practice.</p> <p>Here the task and finish group considered a range of services provided elsewhere, focussing on those local authorities that have similar rural characteristics to Herefordshire but also including local authorities that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are Unitary Councils like Herefordshire</li> <li>• Services are already aligned to expected future requirements</li> <li>• Are in the top 10 Unitary Councils in terms of recycling performance</li> <li>• Have rural Characteristics (only Milton Keynes has been excluded)</li> <li>• Report costs less than those of Herefordshire Council</li> </ul> <p>The local authorities included within the review included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• East Riding</li> <li>• Dorset Waste Partnership</li> <li>• Cheshire West and Chester</li> <li>• Isle of Wight</li> <li>• North Somerset Council</li> <li>• Bath &amp; North East Somerset</li> <li>• South Gloucestershire Council</li> <li>• Rutland County Council</li> <li>• North Lincolnshire.</li> </ul>

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	<p>The analysis showed that all three main types of recycling collection methodologies used in the UK are represented in the top performing (for recycling) Unitary Councils.</p> <p>More details on this are available on pages 13 - 15 of Appendix 2 to the Waste Service Review – Waste Collection report (item 6).</p> <p><a href="https://councillors.herefordshire.gov.uk/documents/s50095887/Appendix%202%20-%20Task%20and%20Finish%20Group%20Report%20Sept%202020.pdf">https://councillors.herefordshire.gov.uk/documents/s50095887/Appendix%202%20-%20Task%20and%20Finish%20Group%20Report%20Sept%202020.pdf</a></p> <p>Visits had been planned to Monmouth and Cheshire West and Chester to allow members of the T&amp;F group to experience the operational elements of service provision using kerbside boxes, reusable bags, food waste collections and garden waste collections. Unfortunately these had to be cancelled due to COVID restrictions.</p> <p>Officers working with the T&amp;F group shared their experiences of the services provided in Rutland County Council, North Lincolnshire Council and Brent Council in London.</p>
<b>Text of Supplementary Question (if any)</b>	<b>Text of Answer to Supplementary</b>

# Public Question Register

	Name	Location	Topic	Committee	Date	Answer Provided By
899	A Anon	Anon	protecting victims of peer-on-peer sexual assault	Cabinet	25/11/2021	Cabinet Member - Children and Families

<b>Text of question</b>	<b>Text of Answer</b>
Why are Council officers withholding from Cabinet Members and from campaigners the name of the QC commissioned to provide legal advice on the issue of protecting victims of peer-on-peer sexual assault from further contact in school or college with the alleged perpetrator?	Peter Oldham QC from 11 Kings Bench Walk chambers has previously given external legal advice to the council and this advice is not disclosable because it is legally privileged and the council is not going to waive that. It is not a document open for public inspection.
<b>Text of Supplementary Question (if any)</b>	<b>Text of Answer to Supplementary</b>
<p>Peter Oldham's legal advice informed an answer to a public question to CYP Scrutiny in August. The question asked when it would be legal for a school to leave a rape victim in class with the alleged perpetrator.</p> <p>The written answer to this question was withdrawn the day after publication. The answer had completely failed to take into account the implications for schools of the Human Rights Act and Equality Act. This was an extraordinary omission since the Department for Education's guidance clearly states that schools must take into account the duties under both Acts.</p> <p>Given these circumstances, it is a strange choice by Legal Services to go back to the same QC for further advice, particularly after Members asked that a different QC was commissioned.</p> <p>How comfortable do Cabinet Members feel with Legal Services' decision making on this matter?</p>	<p>Response from cabinet member</p> <p>The cabinet member confirmed that she did personally have confidence in the process, in which a well-respected external expert was commissioned to look into the council's internal processes and the cabinet member's priority was that that work is effective and makes the council's decision making better. A detailed written response would be provided.</p> <p>Written response to supplementary question Cabinet supports the officer decision to instruct this QC.</p>



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# Public Question Register

	Name	Location	Topic	Committee	Date	Answer Provided By
898	Mr A Hill	Hereford	Waste Management Strategy	Cabinet	25/11/2021	Cabinet Member - Commissioning, procurement and assets

Text of question	Text of Answer
<p>The new Waste Management Strategy review is laudable and focuses on many of the important issues. However I strongly believe that there should be equal focus on the necessary evil of disposable nappies.</p> <p>8 million disposable nappies go to landfill every day in the UK:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· That's 3 billion per year</li> <li>· That's 500,000 tons per year</li> <li>· That's more than 6.5% of domestic unrecyclable waste</li> <li>· That's 500 years to rot down giving off methane</li> <li>· Yet only 8% of parents use re-useable nappies, so clearly parents prefer the convenience of disposables</li> </ul> <p>There is a potential solution, used throughout Wales. Nappicycle provide bins and pick up nappies from the roadside. 100% is recycled. Councils do this alongside a cash promotion for mothers to buy re-useable nappies.</p> <p>The new strategy writes of a promotion of re-useable nappies only, can we look into the 'welsh solution'?</p>	<p>Thank you for your positive feedback regarding the direction of the new Waste Management Strategy and question regarding disposable nappies.</p> <p>As you have mentioned the new waste strategy sets out our plans to promote the use of reusable nappies throughout Herefordshire. We will be encouraging parents to use reusable nappies through a communications campaign on social media, via our website and by providing information to parents requesting larger general rubbish bins through our service. We will also be working to build upon our relationship with our local nappy library group, utilising their expertise to provide a platform for practical advice for parents and offering workshops and promotional events.</p> <p>We are currently assessing an additional proposal to consider introducing a financial incentive (cash back scheme) for the purchase of reusable nappy kits, or funding the purchase and distribution of the kits via the council or our local group. If introduced we believe these measure will help to increase the use of reusable nappies across Herefordshire.</p> <p>Whilst it is very interesting to hear of the work going on with several Welsh local authorities and Nappicycle, our research shows no local authorities providing a 3 weekly collection for general rubbish in England offer a separate nappy collection. A recently proposed</p>

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	<p>scheme at one of these local authorities was met with a very limited response by just two residents.</p> <p>The separate collection of nappies for recycling is not an option we will be immediately considering as part of the proposed change to the collection service from 2023, but should the need ever arise we will keep it in mind through any future service development.</p>
<p><b>Text of Supplementary Question (if any)</b></p>	<p><b>Text of Answer to Supplementary</b></p>
<p>After Food waste, nappies and adult hygiene products are the biggest component of residual waste at around 12%. Uptake of re-usable nappies is unfortunately proven to be no more than 10% of parents. 19 of 22 Welsh Local Authorities are doing or have signed up to recycle disposable nappies and adult hygiene products. Whilst a little more expensive it diverts so much from landfill, and allows for residual waste to be collected even less frequently. A big win for the environment and Herefordshire County Council. Can the Cabinet please confirm that they have looked into the recycling of disposable nappies and AHP's within their review?</p>	<p>We are looking into this within the review. The decision today is not the end of the journey but just the start. We have approximately a year and a half to go through a number of different trials and look at best practice in other local authorities. I will provide updates when we have more information on what options we are taking forward.</p>



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	<b>Name</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Committee</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Answer Provided By</b>
897	Mr P McKay	Leominster	Restricted Byways	Cabinet	25/11/2021	Cabinet Member - Infrastructure and Transport

<b>Text of question</b>	<b>Text of Answer</b>
<p>Thank you for your written reply to my question of 28 October. The full definition of C.R.F &amp; C.R.B. on the Schedule of Information raised by Parish Meetings, Approved by Rural District Councils, and Accepted by former Herefordshire County Council is “Public Carriage Road or Cart Road or Green Lane mainly used Footpath – C.R.F., or Bridleway – C.R.B.”, but these were shown by Herefordshire County Council on Definitive Map as F.P. or B.R. without any explanation to detriment of other users. So I ask if as part of the review of best practice you would consider identifying these as prospective Restricted Byways, with the Schedules of Information having been digitised but not made viewable online the onus being with yourselves rather than the Parishes/Public to address this issue by 2026?</p>	<p>The council is not aware of any errors in managing the Parish Council’s, Rural District and accepted by the County Council as part of the historical PRow submissions.</p> <p>The information submitted by parish council is available to view at the HARC council offices in Rotherwas, when resources allow and if feasible, we will look into providing the information on the website.</p> <p>The resource required to review would be significant and would divert limited resources from other priorities such as DMMO applications. If we are made aware of anomalies, we will manage the enquiry as we do with the Definitive Map Modification application process.</p>
<b>Text of Supplementary Question (if any)</b>	<b>Text of Answer to Supplementary</b>

# Public Question Register

	Name	Location	Topic	Committee	Date	Answer Provided By
896	Ms B Shore	Hereford	No response received to a supplementary question	Cabinet	25/11/2021	Cabinet Member - Finance and Corporate Services and planning

Text of question	Text of Answer
<p>I submitted a question to CYP Scrutiny committee on 7th September, followed up with a supplementary. The officer present could not answer. One month later, after an email to democratic services, they replied, "I will follow up on the response to your supplementary question as requested and provide an update on when a response can be provided." I have heard nothing, despite two further emails asking when I might expect an answer. It is 9 weeks since my question and 5 weeks since the above reply. Public accountability is essential to local democracy. It is a serious matter when public questions are ignored. It should be a given that a simple question will be answered. Does the Cabinet have a policy in place to ensure that public questions are answered promptly and that emails are not ignored?</p>	<p>Thank you for bringing this matter to my attention. First may I apologise personally to you for the way in which your question has been handled, and also for the council's failure to communicate effectively with you regarding the reasons for the delay in providing you with a written response to your September scrutiny question.</p> <p>I am disappointed that you have needed to submit a further question to this cabinet meeting in order to finally elicit the outstanding response.</p> <p>I am advised that the response issued this week apologises for the delay you have experienced. I understand that it also states that the council should have kept you updated and should specifically have advised you that delay created by seeking detailed information from the Children's Service was further exacerbated by there being a current staff shortfall in our Democratic Service team which normally oversees the public questions process.</p> <p>The council's constitution states clearly that a written response will normally be provided within 10 working days of a meeting taking place. This did not happen in your case, and whilst you have been given reasons for this, they are in no way offered up as excuses. We can and must do better.</p> <p>I am sorry for the delay you encountered on this occasion. I hope and expect that this will not happen again.</p>

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	<p>The council is currently reviewing its process for public questions and this will be considered by the council in the new year as part of the ongoing and gallingly glacial governance review. I would like to take this opportunity to assure you that I am taking a very close interest in the Democratic Services and Governance Support aspects of this review. Hopefully we can all look forward to sustained service improvements in the New Year.</p> <p>Thank you for your continued interest in council services and in particular the performance of our Children's Directorate. We welcome your and others' challenge of us when our performance falls below the standards you expect of us and, indeed, below those we set for ourselves</p>
<b>Text of Supplementary Question (if any)</b>	<b>Text of Answer to Supplementary</b>

# Public Question Register

	Name	Location	Topic	Committee	Date	Answer Provided By
895	A Anon	Anon	safeguarding lessons in connection with peer-on-peer sexual abuse cases	Cabinet	25/11/2021	Cabinet Member - Children and Families

Text of question	Text of Answer
<p>One year ago Cabinet responded to concerns over the Council's failure to learn safeguarding lessons in connection with peer-on-peer sexual abuse cases by commissioning an independent external review into</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• why lessons from the CSO report were not shared with schools in 2017</li> <li>• why the 2019 review of peer-on-peer abuse cases failed to mention the CSO report (Cabinet, 26 Nov 2020, Item 8)</li> </ul> <p>One year on, there are still no answers. Campaigners who were praised at CYP Scrutiny (15 Sept 2020) have lost all confidence in the independence of the investigation and a key witness has as a result recently withdrawn from the process.</p> <p>How is it that legal services, whose actions are under the spotlight, were allowed to draft the terms of reference for the review and have been involved in managing the contact between the investigating solicitors and witnesses?</p>	<p>The council has already commissioned solicitors to review the circumstances regarding the circulation of a report produced by Create Safer Organisations (CSO) for a third party in 2017. This work is in progress with a full review of documentation and conducting interviews. The council is grateful of the participation and co-operation from different parties, but appreciate personal choices of those who do not wish to take part. This is an independent process.</p> <p>On 15 September 2020 the children and young people scrutiny committee considered the Peer on Peer Review Herefordshire MASH 2017 - 2019 report and made recommendations to the Executive.</p> <p>On 26th November 2020, Cabinet approved the executive response to the CYP recommendations; the link to this can be found at <a href="http://councillors.herefordshire.gov.uk/mgIssueHistoryHome.aspx?IId=50035813">http://councillors.herefordshire.gov.uk/mgIssueHistoryHome.aspx?IId=50035813</a>.</p> <p>The Executive Response to recommendation 2 was 'Why the CSO Report was not circulated to all Schools will require investigation'.</p> <p>The Cabinet approved that the owner for that Executive Response as the Chief Finance Officer and Deputy Chief Executive, who became the commissioning officer for the investigation. It was agreed with the Head of Legal that this investigation would be carried out by an external law firm as they were known for handling complex and sensitive investigations in the public sector and local government. In consultation with the Commissioning Officer the terms of reference were then drafted by Legal Services and agreed with the Independent</p>

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	<p>investigator. The council has produced guidance to schools on peer on peer abuse that can be found on the council's website (<a href="http://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/schools-education/bullying-1">www.herefordshire.gov.uk/schools-education/bullying-1</a>)</p> <p>Additional response published 25 November To protect the interests of the council and to ensure solicitors were acting within professional conduct rules only those individuals in Legal Services who were not employed by the Council at the time of the CSO Report in 2017 or the issues leading to the CSO Report were involved in the drafting of the terms of reference and involved in managing the contact between the investigating solicitors and witnesses.</p>
<p><b>Text of Supplementary Question (if any)</b></p>	<p><b>Text of Answer to Supplementary</b></p>
<p>The response to my question does not address the concerns that I raised. The concerns are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It is completely inappropriate for legal services to set the terms of reference for an external investigation into their own actions and inactions since 2017 to the current date</li> <li>• It is completely inappropriate for legal services to be managing the contact between witnesses and the external investigators.</li> <li>• The written response confirms that legal services did draft the terms of reference for this so called independent investigation and the written response does not deny that legal services managed the contact between investigators and key witnesses.</li> <li>• In the written response the assertion is made that this is an independent process. Merely making that statement does not make it an independent process. Zero evidence has been offered to address the lack of independence so</li> </ul>	<p>Response from leader of the council A written response would be provided.</p> <p>Written response to supplementary question Cabinet is confident that this work was commissioned in line with standard procedures, as applied to all councils when commissioning work from external legal professionals</p> <p>All council officers are bound by rules of conduct and Solicitors are further bound by their rules of professional conduct. The external solicitor is working to their independent professional standards, and their work is in no way directed by the council. As far as witness engagement is concerned, the council's role is not to mediate, simply to arrange meetings if requested.</p>

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<p>this claim is both meaningless and insults the intelligence of both members and the public.</p> <p>My supplementary question is this: Which members of the Cabinet have confidence in the independence of this investigation?</p> <p>In response to the answer given to the supplementary: “The point is not whether the people employed in 2017 were employed at the time of the publication of the CSO report. There has been lots of action and inaction from then to date to suppress information getting to scrutiny about the CSO report so anybody involved in any aspect of that is compromised. I believe that the person in charge of drafting those terms of reference is one of those people. If you’re losing key witnesses because they don’t believe it is independent how can you confidently have the full picture of what happened?”</p>	
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	<b>Name</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Committee</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Answer Provided By</b>
894	Ms S Newbert	Hereford	water quality of our rivers	Cabinet	25/11/2021	Cabinet Member - Infrastructure and Transport

<b>Text of question</b>	<b>Text of Answer</b>
<p>With the current state of our rivers in Herefordshire so concerning to those of us who live by it and see the deterioration daily. I would like to ask the question who is responsible for the water quality of our rivers and who is responsible for informing the public when the waters are unsafe for bathing and watersports.</p>	<p>Thank you for your question and I agree we should all be very concerned about the quality of our rivers and other natural resources. With regard to the question about who is responsible for the water quality of our rivers, in simple terms it is the Environment Agency (EA) on the English side of the border and National Resources Wales (NRW) on the Welsh.</p> <p>However, all of us who use or live near to a river or stream have a responsibility for water quality. For example, land owners are responsible for managing their land, through good practice and permitting, so as not to cause damage to water quality through manure, chemical or soil pollution and water companies have a responsibility to operate their Treatment Plants so that they only discharge treated waste into a river catchment strictly within the conditions of their permits. The EA and NRW issue and/or monitor those permits.</p> <p>In special conservation areas such as the Lugg catchment, Herefordshire Council also has a responsibility through its planning function to ensure that they are certain that any new developments do not increase the level of phosphate pollution entering the catchment. The Council is also working to create Integrated Wetlands which remove phosphate pollution from Water Treatment Plants, most of this reduction will be used to enable new development in the Lugg catchment but some of it will be used to improve river quality.</p>

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The EA and NRW have a responsibility to monitor and report on water quality. They are also responsible, as already mentioned, for providing permits and regulating businesses, farms and homes that discharge water or waste water into rivers. The Environment agency also provide advice and enforce the rules about how land can best be used on farms so as to minimise detrimental impact water quality. Natural England also have a role as a statutory consultee in the Council's planning process. We need to remember, as already mentioned, that the River Wye and the Lugg are located in two countries which are subject to different rules about how land is used. Natural Resource Wales (which combines the work that the Environment Agency and Natural England do on the English side of the border) has similar functions to Natural England but the rules they work by a different.

Even Herefordshire residents have a part to play in improving river quality too for example by not dropping litter in or near rivers and by carefully choosing and using the right angling equipment.

As you can see from the answer, although the Environment Agency has ultimate responsibility for the rivers in our county in terms of national governance, we all need to play our part and work together. In Herefordshire this is all brought together through a voluntary partnership called the Nutrient Management Board who keep oversight of a voluntary plan to improve river quality.

We think that there is more that can be done to improve water quality for everyone who uses or lives near our rivers and Herefordshire Council will continue to work with all our partners and to lobby government very hard too to ensure the much needed improvement that is needed in our rivers.

Turning lastly to your specific point about swimming and bathing. Councils have a duty to provide designated bathing areas but where they voluntarily choose to provide them then they must provide



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	information to bathers using designated areas. Herefordshire has chosen not to adopt any designated swimming or bathing areas but will continue to work very hard with all our partners to improve river quality.
<b>Text of Supplementary Question (if any)</b>	<b>Text of Answer to Supplementary</b>

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	<b>Name</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Committee</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Answer Provided By</b>
893	Ms J Liddle	Ledbury	peer on peer sexual abuse cases	Children and Young People Scrutiny	23/11/2021	Reponse given by Officers (Redirected)

<b>Text of question</b>	<b>Text of Answer</b>
<p>“In March 2019 the Legal Services department became aware that there was serious public concern over the handling of peer on peer sexual abuse cases. Specifically, they received information that the CSO report had not been shared with CYP Scrutiny and that lessons about safeguarding had not been learnt. They also received information that other victims of serious sexual assault were being put back into school with their attackers, and that this had caused serious harm in more than one case.</p> <p>Has anyone asked Legal Services why they made the decision in 2019 not to pass on the concerns to CYP Scrutiny committee members or to properly investigate those concerns themselves?”</p>	<p>Response from Commissioning Manager: An external independent investigation commissioned by the Council is currently considering the circumstances regarding the sharing of the CSO report and so it is not possible to provide a response to this question.</p>
<b>Text of Supplementary Question (if any)</b>	<b>Text of Answer to Supplementary</b>

# Public Question Register

	Name	Location	Topic	Committee	Date	Answer Provided By
892	Ms F Reid	Hereford	co-optee vacancy	Children and Young People Scrutiny	23/11/2021	Reponse given by Officers (Redirected)

Text of question	Text of Answer
<p>In the meeting of the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee on 5 August 2021 it was resolved that:</p> <p>"(d) the process be used to recruit an adult representative of families who are or have been supported by social workers ..."</p> <p>shown under Item 21 of the minutes.</p> <p>After more than 14 weeks the co-optee vacancy still has not been advertised on Hoople's website (as at noon on 17 November 2021). This delay has meant that any co-optee selected has not been able to participate in at least three Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee meetings than would have been the case if he or she had been recruited in a timely manner.</p> <p>Will the committee recommend a firm timeline for the above mentioned co-optee position to be recruited and inducted on to the committee?</p>	<p>Response from the Monitoring Officer:</p> <p>We apologise for the delay in recruiting an adult representative of families who are or have been supported by social workers. I can confirm that the advertisement for this position and that of the other vacant co-optee positions has now gone live on the Hoople website (as of 19 November) and has also been added to the Council's facebook page. We have put a deadline for final expressions of interest of Friday 14 January 2022; applicants will be notified immediately following this date and if appointed, will be invited to attend the next committee meeting.</p>
Text of Supplementary Question (if any)	Text of Answer to Supplementary
<p>The Hoople advertisement includes:</p> <p>"To reflect the views and interests of families who are or have been supported by social workers relating to matters under discussion at the Children's Scrutiny Committee. This could be someone with lived experience of this support or, for example, a volunteer in this area."</p>	

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<p>The resolution on 5 August 2021 was in response to a question about Experts by Experience and “adult” excluded those supported as children.</p> <p>If there is more than one expression of interest for the “adult representative of families”, it is not known how and by whom he/she will be selected.</p> <p>Is the committee confident that any co-optee appointed will accord with their intent on 5 August 2021, namely:</p> <p>If at all possible, an Expert by Experience and not an adult who as a child was supported by a social worker?</p>	
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	<b>Name</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Committee</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Answer Provided By</b>
891	Ms C Price	Hereford	Children's improvement	Cabinet	28/10/2021	Cabinet Member - Children and Families

<b>Text of question</b>	<b>Text of Answer</b>
<p>I would like to ask the following question from healthwatch herefordshire in relation to the Children's improvement plan please. The plan outlines a measure of success as 'what children and families tell us' and also on page 16 references 'service user groups'. Can you outline who the SRO will be and who will implement engagement to gain feedback from children and families, what form this will take and how you will ensure it is continual, representative and effective.</p>	<p>The responsible officer will be the Director of Children's and Families who will oversee engagement with new and existing service user representative groups and work with relevant advocacy and support services in Herefordshire (including Healthwatch Herefordshire) to ensure that current and future engagement activities are representative and effective. It is our intention to develop and publish an engagement strategy early in the New Year.</p>
<b>Text of Supplementary Question (if any)</b>	<b>Text of Answer to Supplementary</b>

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	Name	Location	Topic	Committee	Date	Answer Provided By
890	Mr P McKay	Leominster	DM Modifications - Highways and public rights of way map	Cabinet	28/10/2021	Cabinet Member - Infrastructure and Transport

Text of question	Text of Answer
<p>I have noticed that the map of DM Modifications is no longer available on the "Highways and public rights of way map" webpage. This was a useful map, showing what was, or was not, subject of Modification in an area, and I ask if you could confirm that it is Council policy to make such information available and check that it will be reinstated, perhaps as part of a Modification web page upgrade, with option to search from the map?</p>	<p>Thank you for your question, my officers have checked the system and the Map can be viewed through the Online Highways and Public Rights of Way Map (Proposed PROW Orders Tab) using the following link: Highways and public rights of way map – Herefordshire Council The routes highlighted in red shows applications for definitive map modification orders, and amendments to the List Of Streets. This mapping includes both current applications and those that have been resolved either by now being recorded on the Definitive Map or having been rejected on grounds of insufficient evidence. The map is searchable by Settlement, Road or Address. Alternatively the definitive map modification order (DMMO) register can be viewed at: Definitive Map and Statement (DMS) – Herefordshire Council The register is searchable by Parish, Town or Village. Hope this answers your questions adequately Mr McKay but happy to discuss further</p>
Text of Supplementary Question (if any)	Text of Answer to Supplementary
<p>Thank you for your reply informing me of the new online location of this information. Sometime ago the information regarding 'known anomalies' was taken off line, and I wonder if this also has a new location that I am</p>	<p>The anomalies list is not available on-line, however we will review and if possible, we will share on line. The review will be undertaken as resources become available. The anomalies list is available to be viewed at the Balfour Beatty Offices in Thorn, appointments can be</p>

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not aware of, and if you could confirm that ways approved for submission on first definitive map as C.R.F. or C.R.B. by Parish Meeting, approved by Rural District Council, but shown by Herefordshire Council as F.P. or B.R. without any explanation to detriment of other users are included 'known anomalies', and if not arrange for them to be included, so that they may be subject to investigation in same manner as other 'known anomalies' as part of the 'Unresourced Projects', reference BBLP Annual-Plan Annex 11 2020-21, acknowledging them as items to be addressed to avoid them becoming overlooked?

made by calling 01432 261800 or  
[herefordshireprow@bblivingplaces.com](mailto:herefordshireprow@bblivingplaces.com).

The Anomalies list contains details of errors on the Definitive Map and Statement such as rights of way which do not meet public highways or drafting errors. The designation of CRBs or CRFs as footpath or Bridleways is not necessarily a reason to add them to the anomalies list, as such, they are not listed. If there are areas of concern they need to be submitted as a Definitive Map Modification Order (DMMO) so that the case or cases can be investigated following the DMMO process.

For your information, we are considering bringing PROW back in-house within the next 6 months, either for January 1st or the by the new financial year. As part of that process we will be undertaking a review of best practice and consider what resources are needed to make as much information as possible available online.

Information  
CRB Carriage Roads used as Bridleways  
CRF Carriage Roads used as Footpaths  
FB Footpath  
BR Bridleway

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	Name	Location	Topic	Committee	Date	Answer Provided By
889	Mr M Willmont	Hereford	proposed transport hub at the Railway Station	Cabinet	28/10/2021	Cabinet Member - Infrastructure and Transport

Text of question	Text of Answer
<p>Recently, if I recall correctly, a Cabinet Member in discussing issues around the proposed transport hub at the Railway Station suggested that he would not want to see bus shelters in front of/obscuring the view of such an important Listed Building.</p> <p>This being the case could the Council apply a similar approach to Shire Hall by removing the bus shelters in St Peters Square. These significantly obscure the view of the building and also are a major interference with events, primarily Remembrance Sunday, at the War Memorial. There is a sufficient covered waiting area by St Peters Church. Please remove the bus shelters by 14 November 2021.</p>	<p>Thank you for your question Mr Willmont, that is a very good question and I tend to agree with you.</p> <p>Obviously the The Shirehall bus waiting facilities, including shelters and improved access for disabled people have been in place for many years. The location provides bus users, many of whom are elderly and with reduced mobility, with safe access to the bus network and some protection from weather when they are waiting for their service. It is important that access is available from the passenger side entrance to the vehicle and the 3 stands have been designed for this purpose – this would not be the case if access was relocated to the adjacent St Peters Church location and hence would not be acceptable in terms of basic health and safety requirements.</p> <p>Whilst I cannot support your suggestion to pull the shelters down by the 14th of next month (although I appreciate your determination and optimism, even if your tongue is firmly in cheek) it will be possible to look at locations of waiting facilities as part of the City Masterplan project and consider alternatives which maintain convenient and safe access for bus users and also consider overall public realm benefits. I will specifically ask the team dealing with both the Hereford City Centre Improvement (HCCI) project and the broader belated City Masterplan, that is beginning to be drawn together, to consider removing the shelters from in front of The Shirehall to give the public the best view of The Shirehall, which, as you point out, is a heritage</p>



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	<p>asset which deserves respect and appreciation. I am confident we can relocate the same shelters close by in a way that works well. As we begin to draw our City and County masterplans together, if you have any other thoughts on such matters and aspects of the City's or market town's built environment your experience and knowledge would be much appreciated and you may write directly to me if that is helpful and you so wish, it certainly will be helpful to me.</p>
<b>Text of Supplementary Question (if any)</b>	<b>Text of Answer to Supplementary</b>

# Public Question Register

	<b>Name</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Committee</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Answer Provided By</b>
888	A Anon	Anon	offer of a legal briefing to members	Children and Young People Scrutiny	12/10/2021	Chair of Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee

<b>Text of question</b>	<b>Text of Answer</b>
<p>On 1 June 2021, the CYP Scrutiny committee was offered a legal briefing by a member of the public who has been raising concerns for a number of years that Herefordshire Council's response to allegations of serious sexual assault and rape by a school student fails to take into account a school's legal duties under the Human Rights Act and the Equality Act.</p> <p>This member of the public has been involved in successful legal action against a Herefordshire secondary school which put a child back into class with the boy identified as the rapist.</p> <p>It is four months since the offer was made. Given that the essential purpose of the Committee is to scrutinize decisions made by the Council to ensure that children are properly safeguarded, why has the Committee chosen not to take up the offer?</p>	<p>The committee are aware of, and is grateful to, the offer made by a member of the public to provide a briefing on the Human Rights Act and the Equality Act. The committee is committed to taking up the offer and sorry it has taken so long to organise, but we are still seeking advice on how such an offer may be accommodated within a package of training and development currently under development.</p>
<b>Text of Supplementary Question (if any)</b>	<b>Text of Answer to Supplementary</b>



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	<b>Name</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Committee</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Answer Provided By</b>
887	Councillor R Phillips	Herefordshire Council	Wild in the Curl project	Council	08/10/2021	Leader of the Council

<b>Text of question</b>	<b>Text of Answer</b>
<p>Will the Leader of the Council join me in congratulating the Wild in the Curl project in my ward on its work to improve the quality of the water and improve the wildlife of the Curl brook catchment?</p> <p>In a catchment of over 6,000 acres with 25 farms including chicken, dairy, fruit, maize, potatoes ,beef and sheep production and a main village sewage system; over five years their sampling and surveys reveal a reduction of phosphate in the water course and increased numbers of species and improved habitat.</p>	<p>Thank you for drawing my attention to this excellent project. I am pleased to join you in congratulating and thanking those involved in this project. There must surely be things that can be learnt from this project which has reduced phosphates and improved the ecology of area. I will ask that officers consider what might be learnt. It may be that the Nutrient Management Board should study this.</p>
<b>Text of Supplementary Question (if any)</b>	<b>Text of Answer to Supplementary</b>
<p>Would the Leader push Natural England to fund elements of the project that had resulted in improvements to water quality.</p>	<p>The Leader confirmed he would look to do this and work with Natural England.</p>

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	<b>Name</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Committee</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Answer Provided By</b>
886	Councillor R I Matthews	Herefordshire Council	Staff leavers during the last 12 Months	Council	08/10/2021	Leader of the Council

<b>Text of question</b>	<b>Text of Answer</b>
<p>Could the leader of the council inform members how many members of staff have left this Authority in the last 12 months and what has been the financial cost to the council overall?</p>	<p>In the last 12 months, 164 employees have left the council. It hasn't been possible to obtain the costs data in the timescale allowed and this will follow in writing.</p> <p>The rate at which staff leave the council has remained stable overall and the council's current staff turnover rate is 12.3 %. This rate compares favourably with the median rate for local government which is 13.5%<sup>1</sup>.</p> <p>The council continues to work hard to attract the best candidates to the council and make the council a great place to work so that staff want to stay. This work is targeted when needed and includes retention interviews to identify staff thinking of leaving and exit interviews to understand why people have left. Targeted work is currently underway in service areas such as planning, social work and legal services.</p> <p>----- -----</p> <p>[1] Local Government Association Workforce Summary Data published March 2021</p>
<b>Text of Supplementary Question (if any)</b>	<b>Text of Answer to Supplementary</b>

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How many members of staff had left the authority in 2019-2020 and 2020-2021 financial years and what costs were incurred by the Council. What plans were in place to recruit to existing vacancies and when would all staff be replaced?

: The number of employees leaving the council in the requested financial years and the costs incurred can be found in the table below.

Financial year	Number of leavers	Cost to council
2019/2020	170	19,138.27
2020/2021	134	62,694.07

Redundancy costs and only costs above contractual entitlement are included.

The rate at which staff leave the council has remained relatively stable overall and the council's current staff turnover rate is 12.3 %. This rate compares favourably with the median rate for local government which is 13.5%<sup>1</sup>.

The council continues to work hard to attract the best candidates to the council and make the council a great place to work so that staff want to stay. This work is targeted when needed and includes retention interviews to identify staff thinking of leaving and exit interviews to understand why people have left.

Not all staff who have left will be replaced. When staff leave we take the opportunity to review whether we need to fill the post and if we do, plans are made to recruit as soon as possible. If necessary agency workers are used to fill short term gaps. Although having 100% of vacancies filled would be an ideal situation, this is realistically not achievable for any local authority.

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[1] Local Government Association Workforce Summary Data published March 2021

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	<b>Name</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Committee</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Answer Provided By</b>
885	Mr S Adams	Leominster	Macrebur	Council	08/10/2021	Cabinet Member - Infrastructure and Transport

<b>Text of question</b>	<b>Text of Answer</b>
<p>A while back I asked a question about the use of plastic roads in Herefordshire provided by Macrebur, a Scottish based company. The response was that apparently Hereford council were waiting for the results of the DTI trials. These have now been completed successfully, Macrebur has laid roads, which utilise non-recyclable plastic waste in a number of locations, both in the U.K. and globally. The product has been proven to be much more resistant to potholes, stronger than standard asphalt and cost effective.</p> <p>When is Herefordshire council going to look into this company further, and adopt their product as being more effective, and better for the environment?</p> <p>The company has a patent on their product so it is only available through Macrebur.</p>	<p>The council has followed the trials of the Macrebur product mentioned above, specifically in Cumbria with interest.</p> <p>The council is an active member of the regional service improvement group where new materials and best practice are shared. We explore the benefits of alternative materials to understand the whole life cost and benefits of the material used on the network, Cumbria are part of the group.</p> <p>The Highways team have made contact to further understand the specification and the benefits of introducing the Macrebur product to the supply chain, this will progress to inform material selection for future programmes.</p>
<b>Text of Supplementary Question (if any)</b>	<b>Text of Answer to Supplementary</b>

# Public Question Register

	<b>Name</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Committee</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Answer Provided By</b>
884	Mr P McKay	Leominster	Definitive Map Modification Order Register	Council	08/10/2021	Cabinet Member - Infrastructure and Transport

<b>Text of question</b>	<b>Text of Answer</b>
<p>Could an option be added to enable the Index of the Definitive Map Modification Order Register to be viewed online in Numerical/Date Order, part of which has recently been provided under FOI, as this presently only may be searched under Parish/Town/Village, enabling the latest applications to be identified and viewed?</p>	<p>The request appears to be deliverable, the council will explore to understand if this is the case and what resource will be required to make it happen, if achievable, the council will undertake the exercise once resource becomes available.</p>
<b>Text of Supplementary Question (if any)</b>	<b>Text of Answer to Supplementary</b>
<p>When exploring to understand if my request is deliverable could you also give consideration to fact that much of what is shown, or not shown, on the Definitive Map originates from path survey information provided by Parish Meeting when first Definitive Map was raised in the 1950's, when the option to show such information online was not available. Now that this Parish Meeting information has been digitised would Council make it viewable online, along with the List of Anomalies, and encourage Parishes to check that what has been shown on todays records is as was intended, to submit further information to complete gaps, address anomalies, etc., before the 2026 cutoff date when unrecorded paths may be extinguished and completion/correction may become more complex?</p>	<p>The Cabinet Member explained in response to the supplementary question that the proposal would be looked into. He also explained that there was currently a move to review bringing the rights of way service 'back in house'.</p>



# Public Question Register

	Name	Location	Topic	Committee	Date	Answer Provided By
883	Councillor N Shaw	Herefordshire Council	Highways Maintenance Issues - missing cat's eyes	Cabinet	23/09/2021	Cabinet Member - Infrastructure and Transport

Text of question	Text of Answer
<p>I am informed by BBLP that there is no budget for cat's eyes; road marking or anti-skid replacement in the County of Herefordshire. Given that I have a number of fast roads in my ward, where the Council insists on maintaining the national speed limit against the wishes of the local population, can the council at least undertake to maintain these items that help to protect the lives of those in my community, and take immediate action now that foggy, darker mornings are about to return? Brockhampton Group Parish Council have requested that I raise the matter of missing cat's eyes on the B4203 and A44 as a matter of particular public concern</p>	<p>Thank you Cllr Shaw for your question. I can assure you that there is budget available for road marking, anti-skid and cat's eye replacement within the Annual and Forward Plan maintenance budgets.</p> <p>Within the Annual Plan there is a budget of £100k for lining (this also covers studs) and £100k for loss of control sites. Last year we had additional £300k which was programmed and delivered to help deal with the demand.</p> <p>Each year the highways asset is maintained in line with the council's Highways Maintenance Plan (HMP). A risk based approach is adopted to maintain the network based on inspections and surveys within the constraints of available funding. If there is an identified need following the safety inspection the works will be identified, categorised and delivered in line with the HMP within available budgets.</p> <p>In short, we will never compromise on safety and if more money is needed to cover safety features it will be taken out of the annual plan to the detriment of any other planned standard works.</p> <p>I have asked highway officers to liaise with BBLP (our road network managers and inspectors) ASAP and report back the issues highlighted by the parish council regards missing cats eyes on the B4203 and A44 and will come back to you with a written reply.</p>

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<b>Text of Supplementary Question (if any)</b>	<b>Text of Answer to Supplementary</b>
<p>I thank the Cabinet member for his assurance and look forward to the written reply by a highways officers. If they could detail how much this administration has spent on such replacement of cat's eyes (studs) since May 2019, excluding resurfacing installations, that would also be additionally reassuring</p>	<p>I thank Councillor Shaw for the question and I am sure we will do that. I would also like to ask Councillor Shaw a question, anything we struggle to do is not because of a lack of will but primarily is a lack of funding. I appreciate it if he could write to his MP to ask for some of the return of the revenue grant which has been lost over the last 10 years which is about approx. £60m per year which impacts us enormously.</p>

# Public Question Register

	Name	Location	Topic	Committee	Date	Answer Provided By
882	Mrs C Stubbins	Hereford	Future development options for the former Holme Lacy Primary School in Herefordshire	General Overview and Scrutiny	22/09/2021	Cabinet Member - housing, regulatory services, and community safety

Text of question	Text of Answer
Can the Scrutiny Committee please clarify the following with the relevant Council officers: if the school site is sold for private housing, what other sites exist in Herefordshire where the proceeds of the sale can be reinvested in affordable housing development?"	Dear Mrs Stubbings, the Holme Lacy Site offers the potential for delivering affordable homes to progress the council's aspiration of delivering affordable homes within the county. The site also offers the opportunity to be sold on the open market whereby the capital receipt would be used to cross-subsidise alternative developments identified within the pipeline of sites that the Council are currently assessing. A decision will be taken after a third party design team has completed outline designs, site surveys and financial viability assessments.
Text of Supplementary Question (if any)	Text of Answer to Supplementary
"Affordable rural housing development sites rarely become available. The Holmes Lacy site is a once in a generation opportunity to deliver affordable housing while making much needed improvements in infrastructure to mitigate the impact on the village. I'm concerned that if the site is not used for affordable housing then it is unlikely that other rural sites will be made available for those wishing to live in the community. If the pipeline list does not include other sites in the rural Herefordshire area, how will the Council assist local people who can't afford current housing market prices?"	"From our pipeline of developments we are considering all Council land at the moment. We are also engaging with third parties, looking at other sites, as we recognise that the Council cannot deliver all the required affordable housing. We know that we have an extensive shortfall of affordable homes; both social housing and shared ownership homes for first time buyers and key workers who need and want to live in the area close to work and family."



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	Name	Location	Topic	Committee	Date	Answer Provided By
881	Mr G Haughton	Hereford	Future development options for the former Holme Lacy Primary School in Herefordshire	General Overview and Scrutiny	22/09/2021	Cabinet Member - housing, regulatory services, and community safety

Text of question	Text of Answer
<p>Although relatively close to Hereford city as the crow flies, Holme Lacy remains isolated from it and due to the busy roads without pavements make it impossible to walk to the city centre.</p> <p>In addition to the above point, there is no local convenience store in Holme Lacy and again access the nearest store is way outside of safe walking/cycling distance.</p> <p>There is no school within the village meaning children already have to travel by vehicle to schools, increasing road congestion.</p> <p>The road through Holme Lacy already gets very busy, particularly during rush hour as many vehicles from the Rotherwas Industrial Estate chose to travel this way to the North of the city rather than get stuck in queues over the main Hereford bridge. This proposal will only increase traffic and dangers to children in the village.</p> <p>This proposal, put simply, doesn't make any logical sense. There are large areas of land in the Lower Bullingham area of Hereford that have been earmarked for thousands of houses. There is absolutely no need for affordable housing in a remote village outside of the city. I believe that there may be a school still interested in this site. If this was the case, would the school not get first refusal?</p>	<p>Dear Mr Haughton, the connectivity of the site, baseline transport data including availability of public transport and the proposed development access strategy will be provided by the applicant in the form of a transport assessment/statement. All applications will be assessed by the Highways and Transport development team as to the acceptability of the proposal. As outlined in the Cabinet report 22nd July 2021, there is a genuine need for affordable homes for residents within Holme Lacy even though services (apart from the Agricultural College) are not offered within the village. To understand the needs of the residents, consultation with the Parish Council and residents will be undertaken to support any proposal that is submitted to the Local Planning Authority. There has to be a balance of delivering genuinely affordable homes and meeting the needs of the community to ensure that everyone has an opportunity to live near to family and become engaged to create a sustainable community that could encourage working from home, vegetable plots to sell locally and open space for children to play safely, amongst other options that could be explored.</p>

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Text of Supplementary Question (if any)	Text of Answer to Supplementary

## Public Question Register

	<b>Name</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Committee</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Answer Provided By</b>
880	Mr G Knappett	Hereford	Future development options for the former Holme Lacy Primary School in Herefordshire	General Overview and Scrutiny	22/09/2021	Cabinet Member - housing, regulatory services, and community safety

<b>Text of question</b>	<b>Text of Answer</b>
The council have put monetary reward before common sense. Why can't executive houses be built, which there is a serious need for, and more fitting for the surrounding community? Affordable dwellers will be isolated in a village with no services.	Dear Mr Knappett, the Holme Lacy Site offers the potential for delivering affordable homes to progress the council's aspiration of delivering affordable homes within the county. The site also offers the opportunity to be sold on the open market whereby the capital receipt would be used to cross-subsidise alternative developments in other areas of the county. To assess the viability of the Holme Lacy Site as affordable houses and/or providing the potential for a capital receipt to cross-subsidise other schemes, a third party design team will need to be engaged to complete outline designs, site surveys and financial viability assessments prior to completing any planning application submission.
<b>Text of Supplementary Question (if any)</b>	<b>Text of Answer to Supplementary</b>

# Public Question Register

	Name	Location	Topic	Committee	Date	Answer Provided By
879	Mr G Hewett	Herefordshire	Future development options for the former Holme Lacy Primary School in Herefordshire	General Overview and Scrutiny	22/09/2021	Cabinet Member - housing, regulatory services, and community safety

Text of question	Text of Answer
<p>Should it not be considered that a public meeting be held within the Holme Lacy Village Hall to address the many fears and concerns of Holme Lacy villagers, there are many who do not understand the proceedings and would want clear explanation in person.</p> <p>The Villagers were given full assurances after the initial meeting to remove the Educational Status from the school, we would then hear again from the Council with its thoughts and recommendations, it seems the villagers have no voice.</p> <p>I look forward in receiving invitation as requested to attend the meeting next week.</p>	<p>Dear Mr Hewett, on the 22nd July 2021 the Cabinet took the decision to commission an outline design for the council site at the former Holme Lacy Primary School. This work on the design has not yet been commissioned and therefore no development plans have yet been drafted at this early stage. On appointment of a design team engagement with local residents, the parish council and ward member will begin to ensure all needs and requirements are captured.</p>
Text of Supplementary Question (if any)	Text of Answer to Supplementary



# Public Question Register

	Name	Location	Topic	Committee	Date	Answer Provided By
878	Ms C Harris	Hereford	Future development options for the former Holme Lacy Primary School in Herefordshire	General Overview and Scrutiny	22/09/2021	Cabinet Member - housing, regulatory services, and community safety

Text of question	Text of Answer
<p>Could the scrutiny committee please ensure that Herefordshire Council keep Holme Lacy Parish Council fully informed directly through its clerk on any future decisions on this site so that residents can be informed as a lot of residents first heard about this through the local press?</p> <p>Local people are very concerned. The Parish council are being constantly asked questions and have not been kept in the loop this far!</p>	<p>Dear Mrs Harris, on the 22nd July 2021 the Cabinet took the decision to commission an outline design for the council site at the former Holme Lacy Primary School. This work on the design has not yet been commissioned and therefore no development plans have yet been drafted at this early stage. On appointment of a design team engagement with local residents, the parish council and ward member will begin to ensure all needs and requirements are captured.</p>
Text of Supplementary Question (if any)	Text of Answer to Supplementary

# Public Question Register

	<b>Name</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Committee</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Answer Provided By</b>
877	Mr N Haughton	Hereford	Future development options for the former Holme Lacy Primary School in Herefordshire	General Overview and Scrutiny	22/09/2021	Cabinet Member - housing, regulatory services, and community safety

<b>Text of question</b>	<b>Text of Answer</b>
Why does there appear to be a complete lack of openness and transparency about this possible development, and a lack of time provided to object/appeal, and this is a current concern in the village.	Dear Mr Haughton, on the 22nd July 2021 the Cabinet took the decision to commission an outline design for the council site at the former Holme Lacy Primary School to allow housing market assessment and for the designs up to and including planning submission for houses at the site. This work on the design has not yet been commissioned and therefore no development plans have yet been drafted at this early stage. On appointment of a design team engagement with local residents, the parish council and ward member will begin to ensure all needs and requirements are captured.
<b>Text of Supplementary Question (if any)</b>	<b>Text of Answer to Supplementary</b>

# Public Question Register

	<b>Name</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Committee</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Answer Provided By</b>
876	Mr C Botterill	Hereford	Future development options for the former Holme Lacy Primary School in Herefordshire	General Overview and Scrutiny	22/09/2021	Cabinet Member - housing, regulatory services, and community safety

<b>Text of question</b>	<b>Text of Answer</b>
<p>It has been brought to our notice today that there is a possibility of development on the disused school in Holme Lacy going ahead? To add 25 homes in a village with no amenities is short sighted and very impractical. We have no shops, no pub, no youth facilities and affordable housing will bring people that need those facilities. The bus service is hit and miss and the roads unsuitable for cyclists. We strongly agree there is a need for affordable housing but these should be in areas that are suitable and have provision for the young generation to be occupied, and the older ones to have reliable public transport etc., and places that they can meet for entertainment and company. Please provide an occasion for the residents of Holme Lacy to comment and express their concerns on this development.</p>	<p>Dear Mr Botterill, as outlined in the Cabinet report 22nd July 2021, there is a genuine need for affordable homes for residents within Holme Lacy even though services (apart from the Agricultural College) are not offered within the village. To understand the needs of the residents, consultation with the Parish Council and residents will be undertaken to support any proposal that is submitted to the Local Planning Authority. There has to be a balance of delivering genuinely affordable homes and meeting the needs of the community to ensure that everyone has an opportunity to live near to family and become engaged to create a sustainable community that could encourage working from home, vegetable plots to sell locally and open space for children to play safely, amongst other options that could be explored.</p>
<b>Text of Supplementary Question (if any)</b>	<b>Text of Answer to Supplementary</b>



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	Name	Location	Topic	Committee	Date	Answer Provided By
875	Mr S Farr	Herefordshire	Future development options for the former Holme Lacy Primary School in Herefordshire	General Overview and Scrutiny	22/09/2021	Cabinet Member - housing, regulatory services, and community safety

Text of question	Text of Answer
<p>The need for affordable homes in the area is essential, as they are everywhere, is a given. However I would like to ask to see the how a development of 25 plus houses in a village that has no practical amenities whatsoever and a very limited bus service that does not cover each end of a working day, fits in with any Council agenda toward general environmental issues, that regarding the local waste water limitations as well as the local increase in traffic and pollution?</p>	<p>Dear Mr Farr, as outlined in the Cabinet report 22nd July 2021, there is a genuine need for affordable homes for residents within Holme Lacy even though services (apart from the Agricultural College) are not offered within the village. To understand the needs of the residents, consultation with the Parish Council and residents will be undertaken to support any proposal that is submitted to the LPA. There has to be a balance of delivering genuinely affordable homes and meeting the needs of the community to ensure that everyone has an opportunity to live near to family and become engaged to create a sustainable community that could encourage working from home, vegetable plots to sell locally and open space for children to play safely, amongst other options that could be explored.</p>
Text of Supplementary Question (if any)	Text of Answer to Supplementary

# Public Question Register

	Name	Location	Topic	Committee	Date	Answer Provided By
874	Mrs J Wiseman	Hereford	Future development options for the former Holme Lacy Primary School in Herefordshire	General Overview and Scrutiny	22/09/2021	Cabinet Member - housing, regulatory services, and community safety

Text of question	Text of Answer
<p>More traffic puts pedestrians at a greater risk of accidents or fatalities crossing a busy B road. (Our front garden wall was demolished by a car). The village has automated speed signs. Will the council commit to further traffic calming measures that are desperately needed in the village?</p>	<p>Dear Mrs Wiseman, there is potential for increased traffic movements in the proposed development, an application for the site will require a Transport Statement/Assessment in support of the proposal, this will consider, pedestrian, cycle and bus connectivity as well as change in traffic generated by the development. The statement/assessment will be vetted by the Highways Transport Team assessing the impact, access strategy, safety implications and what mitigation may be required. The supporting planning information and the Highways/Transport team's report will inform the planning team and help assess the planning application and any subsequent decision.</p>
Text of Supplementary Question (if any)	Text of Answer to Supplementary
<p>Affordable homes/social housing suggests that some of the people who will be residing in these dwellings may be on a low income. Holme Lacy is in a rural location, some families may not have access to their own transport or be able to afford public transport to access local amenities. (Holme Lacy has no shop, post office and a poor bus service). Therefore, residents may experience social isolation, which in turn could have an impact on their mental health, requiring medical intervention, which may put a further strain on an already overstretched Fownhope surgery.</p>	<p>"Social isolation in rural areas is a countywide issue that we are looking to address through our transport strategy. We need to be connecting local villages and the rest of the community. Holme Lacy has been identified as a development site and included in our core strategy and there has to be some proportional development here however each application will be considered on its merit and all these factors will be taken into consideration."</p>

## Public Question Register

Has the council considered how living in a rural location with no amenities, and poor transport links will affect new residents?	
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# Public Question Register

	Name	Location	Topic	Committee	Date	Answer Provided By
873	Mr C Haughton	Hereford	Future development options for the former Holme Lacy Primary School in Herefordshire	General Overview and Scrutiny	22/09/2021	Cabinet Member - housing, regulatory services, and community safety

Text of question	Text of Answer
Nothing to date has been sent me and we are left with the impression that the Council are well aware of the unsuitability of their proposals but are pressing ahead nevertheless. Our question therefore is: Why has the proposed development plans for this site not been openly and transparently shared for comment and discussion with the residents of Holme Lacy, rather than having been apparently shrouded in secrecy and with minimal notice of the meeting on the 22nd September?	Dear Mr Haughton, on the 22nd July 2021 the Cabinet took the decision to commission an outline design for the council site at the former Holme Lacy Primary School to allow housing market assessment and for the designs up to and including planning submission for houses at the site. This work on the design has not yet been commissioned and therefore no development plans have yet been drafted at this early stage. On appointment of a design team engagement with local residents, the parish council and ward member will begin to ensure all needs and requirements are captured.
Text of Supplementary Question (if any)	Text of Answer to Supplementary
“Why is this development being progressed in Holme Lacy a village with no amenities, no village shop, social club etc. and which would mean that young people living there would have nowhere to go, which could in turn lead to an increase in crime.”	“The site was identified in 2019 for potential development and there is a need to deliver affordable homes across the County. Although there are no current amenities, community spaces could be encouraged as part of the development. The proposal would still need to go through the normal Planning process.”



## Public Question Register

	Name	Location	Topic	Committee	Date	Answer Provided By
872	Councillor Y Watson	Herefordshire Council	Biodiversity & Ecology (Core Strategy Policy SS6 and LD2) and Climate Change (Policy SS7 and SD1)	Cabinet	16/09/2021	Cabinet Member - Finance and Corporate Services and planning

Text of question	Text of Answer
<p>Are Biodiversity &amp; Ecology (Core Strategy Policy SS6 and LD2) and Climate Change (Policy SS7 and SD1) compliance checklists completed on ALL planning applications including porches and extensions?</p>	<p>Dear Cllr Watson, thank you for your question – which I take to mean: are all Herefordshire planning applicants submitting biodiversity and ecology checklists with their planning applications. To which the short answer is “no”, not presently.</p> <p>We are recommending that all applicants complete the checklists as part of their initial application submission however, not everyone is doing so. Where these checklists are missing at the validation stage, we are again advising that applicants and agents complete them and return them to the case officer to assist during the determination process.</p> <p>The provision of these checklists is not a requirement in order for a planning application to be accepted as valid. However, the advice that goes out to applicants/agents is that the lack of a checklist may affect the outcome of the application when the climate change and ecological policy considerations are applied later on in the process. In reality, and based on the current policy and practice, biodiversity and ecology compliance is likely to have more bearing upon schemes for new houses and for commercial buildings than it would on most small scale householder applications such as those to which your question refers.</p>

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<b>Text of Supplementary Question (if any)</b>	<b>Text of Answer to Supplementary</b>
How many compliance checklists have been completed since their inception (as percentage compared to those who don't)?	It was confirmed that a written response would be provided.

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	Name	Location	Topic	Committee	Date	Answer Provided By
871	Mr B Albright	Hereford	water quality targets on the river	Cabinet	16/09/2021	Cabinet Member - Infrastructure and Transport

Text of question	Text of Answer
<p>Natural England have recently confirmed: It is our view that it will be extremely difficult if not impossible to meet water quality targets on the river without some action on agriculture. Furthermore, it would not be in accordance with the concept of Fair Share, that sets out parameters for the contribution that each sector might reasonably be expected to make towards resolving the nutrient problem. An action plan for housing alone would not help in allowing development to go ahead, as it could not demonstrate with certainty that water quality targets will be achieved on the river. Which clearly shows that housing actions (ie wetlands and criteria) are not sufficient to restore the river as housing phosphate pollution is too small to be meaningfully reduced. NE are clearly expecting certain and effective phosphate reduction contributions from agriculture in order to release housing, tourism and commercial development projects.</p> <p>The moratorium has strangled our business for more than 2 years- what plans does the council have to bring forward phosphate pollution reduction from the agricultural sector and is this a priority?</p>	<p>Thank you for your question. I am aware of some of the correspondence between the officers and the Herefordshire Construction Lobby Group and am also aware that the officers have been liaising with Natural England on this very same matter. Additionally, we have sought further legal advice to clarify our position on this.</p> <p>It is our view that the greatest impacts upon the Wye catchment which will enable the River Lugg to attain 'favourable condition status' by 2027 will be through tackling agriculture. This is why Herefordshire Council continues to lobby central government and will continue to seek funding assistance for the Environment Agency. Unfortunately the council does not regulate the agricultural sector and your questioning would best be redirected to either the Environment Agency of Defra itself. That said, we have and will do all we can to lobby government for change. We have also instigated cross border discussions with our colleagues at Powys Council, have worked very hard to get our MPs involved in understanding and focussing on the pertinent issues of reduced resources for the regulatory and statutory bodies and we have led engagement with the NFU to encourage all sectors to understand the scale of the problem and identify a pathway to betterment.</p> <p>The current redrawing of the Council's local plan, the Core Strategy, allows us a further opportunity to consider what we can do to make changes to the way the County is built on and farmed.</p>

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<b>Text of Supplementary Question (if any)</b>	<b>Text of Answer to Supplementary</b>
<p>It is encouraging to hear that the Council agrees with Natural England in that the greatest positive impact upon river ecology restoration in the Wye will come from changing agricultural practice. However, as we enter the third year of a crippling housing moratorium we remain deeply concerned that the punishment for the cumulative issues within the agricultural sector are being borne by local construction companies and rural communities.</p> <p>Can the council explain why their planning moratorium is only applied to housing and commercial development in the Lugg catchment and clarify if there are any plans for the moratorium to be extended to the wider catchment and to agricultural developments?</p>	<p>The cabinet member explained that there were no plans to extend the moratorium and that the requirements in terms of neutrality or investment in terms of phosphate load were put in place by Natural England. He also highlighted that the first wetland should shortly be online as part of the council's efforts on mitigation. The council had had discussions with Natural England, the Environment Agency and local MPs in relation to source apportionment between agriculture and housing and the council continued to press national agencies on this issue.</p>

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	<b>Name</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Committee</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Answer Provided By</b>
870	Ms M Albright	Hereford	Net Zero Carbon Affordable Housing Standard Draft	Cabinet	16/09/2021	Cabinet Member - housing, regulatory services, and community safety

<b>Text of question</b>	<b>Text of Answer</b>
<p>The Herefordshire Construction Industry Lobby Group (HCILG) are committed to and support the wider objective of Carbon Zero development across all sectors within Herefordshire. However, having only just seen the Net Zero Carbon Affordable Housing Standard Draft, we were hoping that councillors would be able to offer more clarity on the purpose and intended use of this document?</p>	<p>Dear Mrs Albright, these are the standards we intend to adopt for all housing that we will build as a council ourselves. The purpose of the document is to ensure that all Herefordshire Council built housing from hereafter will now be net zero carbon. The intended use of the document is therefore to guide all stakeholders involved in our council's housing programme as to the required standards.</p> <p>Recognising the urgent need to respond to the climate and ecological emergency and our council's commitment to net zero by 2030, we aim to lead by example in driving up new building standards. These standards will therefore apply to all housing built by Herefordshire Council, but we are also keen to encourage all housing developers to adopt net zero standards themselves and hope the Herefordshire Future Homes Standard will inspire private developers to improve building standards too. We will also shortly be consulting on an Environmental Building Standards SPD that will provide guidance and encouragement to improve the standards of all new buildings in Herefordshire. We are keen to work with all industry stakeholders to address the challenge of the climate crisis and the opportunity of the transition to net zero.</p>
<b>Text of Supplementary Question (if any)</b>	<b>Text of Answer to Supplementary</b>

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	Name	Location	Topic	Committee	Date	Answer Provided By
869	Mr M Willmont	Hereford	rail network for the transport of goods	Cabinet	16/09/2021	Cabinet Member - Infrastructure and Transport

Text of question	Text of Answer
<p>The Council's LTP is fairly ambivalent with regard to the potential for rail freight</p> <p>Notwithstanding this has the Council entered into any discussions with Network Rail, any of the freight operating companies and any local businesses, for example Heineken or Avara Foods, with respect to the use of the rail network for the transport of their goods so as to reduce HGV traffic in Hereford? If not is there any intention to do so?</p>	<p>Thank you for this question, Mr Willmont. As a new administration we sought the views of the business community and other key stakeholders about transport priorities as part the review of the Hereford Transport Strategy which we undertook during 2020 but rail freight was not identified as a priority focus during that consultation. Prior to the Hereford Transport Strategy Review the council, jointly with the Marches LEP, Growing Mid Wales Partnership, Welsh Government and neighbouring local authorities, commissioned the Marches and Mid Wales Freight Strategy which was published in 2018. The strategy was developed by MDS Transmodal and included consultation with parish councils, businesses and other key stakeholders during the development of the strategy. It recognised that main existing rail freight flows to and from the Marches area are mostly construction materials, locally via Moreton-on-Lugg in Herefordshire to various locations around the country. The strategy did not see significant potential to expand rail freight locally concluding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "...road freight would remain the dominate mode for freight transport in the Marches and Mid Wales because of the dispersed pattern of settlement and economic activity...and issues related to the infrastructure which reduces the capacity and capability of the network to accommodation rail freight services."</li> </ul>

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	<p>Additionally the strategy also reviewed the potential for new rail freight facilities reflecting on the relative performance of the bespoke Telford International Railfreight Park:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "...While the rail terminal at Donnington near Telford could have an enhanced role in the future, the Marches and Mid-Wales area is likely to lack the critical mass of traffic to justify the development of further rail-connected distribution parks, and the area is likely to remain reliant to a great extent on long distance road-based distribution to and from the Midlands, including to and from existing potential future rail-connected distribution parks.."</li> </ul> <p>Whilst it is unclear that there is a demand for further rail freight provision amongst the business community we need as a Council to be leading on any opportunity to decarbonise transport and will be raising this issue further through our ongoing discussions with local businesses and in support of the development of the 2050 Big Plan and Hereford City Masterplan.</p> <p>In addition, we have, as a new administration, been financially supporting the business case put forward by local scheme promoters for a new parkway model station at Pontrilas (provisionally suggested as a site adjacent to Pontrilas Timber Mill on the A49). The scheme promoters have had discussions with two local businesses, Pontrilas Timber and Black Mountain Quarries, both of whom have indicated an interest in transporting some materials by rail.</p>
<b>Text of Supplementary Question (if any)</b>	<b>Text of Answer to Supplementary</b>





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	<b>Name</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Committee</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Answer Provided By</b>
868	Ms D Hobbs	Hereford	monitoring of SEN provision	Children and Young People Scrutiny	07/09/2021	Reponse given by Officers (Redirected)

<b>Text of question</b>	<b>Text of Answer</b>
<p>How can you show effective monitoring of SEN provision across the county and within Mainstream Education and then how are you effectively Implementing that this has then been Quality Assured for SEN children?</p>	<p>There are a number of ways that SEN provision is monitored in both mainstream and specialist educational settings in Herefordshire. Schools and settings have a responsibility to make provision to meet the full range of pupils on their roll. As such, they are inspected through the Ofsted inspection framework and the LA monitors inspection letters for SEND specific comments and recommendations. All schools are expected to monitor the success of specific groups including SEND within the school or settings and if there are found to be weaknesses, action to address these should be built into the school improvement plan. The members of the Governing Body act as 'critical friends' to the school and in this regard, the SEN Governor is key to challenging the school about the quality and range of its SEN provision.</p> <p>Where a child has an Education, Health and Care Plan, the school will hold a meeting to review the plan annually. SEN Officers from the LA will attend a proportion of these annual reviews Annual Reviews and the vast majority of our schools are visited in this way every year. The SEN Officers are in a position to challenge progress being made by the child concerned. In addition, a wide range of council officers from the Additional Needs Service, e.g. peripatetic teachers for sensory impairment or educational psychologists, work directly with children in all schools on a regular basis. Where the officers have concerns, these are raised with senior officers. These are discussed</p>

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	<p>at the monthly 'round table' meetings and where it is deemed appropriate, challenge is made to the school. Other intelligence about SEND provision, e.g. if there are complaints from parents or from other non-Council services is also considered at these meetings. The performance of SEN children is monitored across the County as a whole and in relation to specific schools on an annual basis by the LA. Periodically, there are reviews of specific types of provision to ensure that quality is being maintained.</p> <p>There is an action in the latest iteration of the SEND Strategic Action Plan to train expert peer reviewers to conduct peer challenge using a range of SEND indicators similar to those used in the successful 'London Challenge' programme. This work is being supported by the 'Whole School Support for SEND' organisation which is in turn supported by the National Association for Special Education Needs (NASEN).</p>
<b>Text of Supplementary Question (if any)</b>	<b>Text of Answer to Supplementary</b>

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	Name	Location	Topic	Committee	Date	Answer Provided By
867	Ms B Shore	Hereford	Peer on peer abuse guidance	Children and Young People Scrutiny	07/09/2021	Reponse given by Officers (Redirected)

Text of question	Text of Answer
<p>I raised a public question at Cabinet in November 2020 about the use of the term “alleged victim” in the Council’s peer on peer abuse guidance. I set out the arguments and evidence for the importance of using the term victim, rather than alleged victim. In response to my question, it was agreed: “We will ensure that the description “victim” is used in all documentation going forward”.</p> <p>In view of this Cabinet decision, why, 10 months on, does the Council’s published Example Peer on Peer Abuse Policy for Schools continue to use the term “alleged victim”?</p>	<p>I am sorry this has now been changed. The original guidance issued was always intended to be updated regularly as the national guidance to schools changes. The term ‘alleged victim’ has now been changed to reflect this request. It is being issued to schools as the new term starts with the updated terms. There will be further updates in the coming months also as we see this as a guidance that will require constant updating. The current version has the updated terminology in it. The latest national guidance was updated in April 2021 (this was itself delayed) so we waited for that before updating our own. We apologise for the delay.</p>
Text of Supplementary Question (if any)	Text of Answer to Supplementary
<p>Hereford Women’s Equality Group has been working on the issue of peer on peer sexual abuse in schools particularly around keeping victims safe and as such we absolutely welcome the change in the guidance to schools changing alleged victim to victim. This is incredibly important.</p> <p>The national guidance came out in April this year but it took over four months to make this change and when I submitted the question on the first of September ‘alleged victim’ was still being used in the council guidance to schools.</p>	<p>The chairperson indicated that a written response would be provided. The importance of a clear action tracking process was highlighted, with a responsible person identified to deliver actions and a date for completion.</p>

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<p>Why was the word alleged ever used at all given that this committee made a very clear decision in November 2020 to use the word victim in all future documents and why did it take so long to change?</p>	
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	<b>Name</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Committee</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Answer Provided By</b>
866	Ms F Reid	Hereford	Additional Co-optee on to the committee	Children and Young People Scrutiny	05/08/2021	Chair of Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee

<b>Text of question</b>	<b>Text of Answer</b>
Many public organisations use Experts by Experience, for example, many NHS trusts and the Independent Review of Children's Social Care. Would the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee promote the co-opting on to the committee of a representative of families who are or have been supported by social workers at the next Annual General Council Meeting or, if possible, earlier?	The council is open to additional members being on the committee who are not elected members and the constitution enables this committee to co-opt a maximum of two non-voting people as and when required. As the committee has a paper on co-option at this meeting we can consider this request under item 8.
<b>Text of Supplementary Question (if any)</b>	<b>Text of Answer to Supplementary</b>

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	Name	Location	Topic	Committee	Date	Answer Provided By
865	Councillor G Andrews	Herefordshire Council	Hereford City Centre Transport Package (HCCTP) - Development of the remaining elements	Cabinet	29/07/2021	Cabinet Member - Finance and Corporate Services and planning

Text of question	Text of Answer
<p>The recent weeks has highlighted the large variances in project management control that has been completed on significant high profile projects, that have been late on delivery and over budget.</p> <p>I see new Senior Project Managers are now in place, however will HC continue to outsource projects to provider such as BBLP who appear have a poor delivery record HC, or will HC engage their own Project Managers for all future projects, where control is more accountable?</p> <p>Local Project Managers in local projects may provide greater results</p>	<p>Thank you for your question Cllr Andrews. You are correct to highlight that historical project management failures have been a matter of concern in certain areas of the council and that legacy issues continue to come to light.</p> <p>Since coming into office we have made it a priority to create a Project Management Office (PMO) and to staff it with professional and experienced project managers and now Delivery Directors to lead on the many important projects in which this council is investing. Our substantial public realm partnership contract with BBLP has been independently examined. The shortcomings to which you refer stem more from the way the contract has historically been operated. Item 8 on today's agenda is about learning the lessons from how this contract has previously been managed. The recommendations propose the improvements necessary to the way the council operates this contract in the role of 'Customer' which are necessary to derive the full benefit from this partnership arrangement in future. These new contracting and commissioning posts in the PMO will put the checks and balances in place to create and maintain the constructive tension between supplier and customer that are necessary to deliver and demonstrate future value to our residents.</p>

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	<p>We shall continue to use the flexibility that a mix of in-house and contracted-in project managers provides in order to manage the fluctuations in work flow on the delivery of large and complex projects. Whether the Project Managers are our own permanent staff or are specialists working with us for short periods of time, you can be assured that the culture of professional project management is now with us and is here to stay at Herefordshire Council.</p>
<b>Text of Supplementary Question (if any)</b>	<b>Text of Answer to Supplementary</b>



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	<b>Name</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Committee</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Answer Provided By</b>
864	Ms A Bridges	Herefordshire	Hereford City Centre Transport Package (HCCTP) - Development of the remaining elements	Cabinet	29/07/2021	Cabinet Member - Finance and Corporate Services and planning

<b>Text of question</b>	<b>Text of Answer</b>
<p>Given the improvements to governance and oversight of capital projects agreed with Audit &amp; Governance by the then Chief Executive back in January 2018, were the then Leader of the Council (Cllr Lester) and the Cabinet Member for Infrastructure (Cllr Price) made aware of the acquisition overspend and financial risk mounting on the City Link Road project?</p>	<p>The cabinet member decision in November 2017 set out the HCCTP cost increases and how these were proposed to be funded utilising the majority of the risk and inflation contingency allocations within the overall HCCTP – which included all the LEP-funded active travel and public realm projects.</p> <p>Whilst land costs have increased since that time the detail of increased costs set out in that 2017 cabinet member report were based on the project position and information at that time and were set out in detail in the key considerations and financial implications section of that report.</p>
<b>Text of Supplementary Question (if any)</b>	<b>Text of Answer to Supplementary</b>

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	<b>Name</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Committee</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Answer Provided By</b>
863	Mrs M Burns	Hereford	walking and cycling routes	Cabinet	29/07/2021	Cabinet Member - Infrastructure and Transport

<b>Text of question</b>	<b>Text of Answer</b>
If the plan for an urban wetland park, (from a consortium led by Herefordshire Wildlife Trust) on the former Essex Arms site by the City Link Road is approved, will the aim to include a pedestrian/cycleway across the park to link the station transport hub and central Hereford and NMITE also be welcomed?	Thank you for your question. Yes, the ambition would be to provide high quality walking and cycling routes whenever possible and although there are no detailed plans for the area you refer to yet, the direction would be to designers to provide such a link here. That link could then join up with the shared footway / cycleway that runs along the City Link Road to the train station.
<b>Text of Supplementary Question (if any)</b>	<b>Text of Answer to Supplementary</b>

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	Name	Location	Topic	Committee	Date	Answer Provided By
862	Councillor P P Marsh	Herefordshire Council	indicators of wider determinants of health	Health and Wellbeing Board	26/07/2021	Chair of Health and Wellbeing Board

Text of question	Text of Answer
<p>It is increasingly clear with the recent floods and heatwaves how important wider determinants of health are to the wellbeing of all our residents. These include polluted air, poorly insulated homes, scant access to greenspace , loneliness and more. The resulting ill health, both physical and mental, then puts pressure on our health budgets, our community services and our economy.</p> <p>The list of wider determinants of health and wellbeing is a long one, and its reach and impacts will get worse as climate change increasingly pushes extreme weather events.</p> <p>These pressures need to be monitored by the HWB and then to feed into their programmes to protect public health.</p> <p>Please let me know what indicators of wider determinants of health you are currently monitoring and what additions you plan for the Public Health and JSNA reports for 2022/23 and beyond.</p>	<p>We agree that the wider determinants of health are vitally important to the short and long term health and wellbeing of residents of Herefordshire.</p> <p>The Understanding Herefordshire website is Herefordshire's JSNA, and includes information on many of these including, but not limited to air quality, fuel poverty, loneliness, social mobility. The JSNA aims to understand what data means for the county rather than focusing on a defined set of indicators. However, the Public Health Outcomes Framework provides a benchmark of how the county is performing over time and compared to other areas on a range of nationally defined indicators of health and the wider determinants. The latest data can be viewed on PHE's Fingertips site.</p> <p>The 2021 JSNA summary (due to be produced by the end of the year) will be an opportunity to consolidate what is currently known about all topics including wider determinants, and identify gaps for prioritisation in 2022 and beyond. Significant contributions will come from the Talk Community Well-being Survey (the results of which were published on 20 July) and the Growing Up in Herefordshire Survey (results due by September), both of which collect data on a wide range of aspects of life in the county.</p>
Text of Supplementary Question (if any)	Text of Answer to Supplementary

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I am particularly keen that we have information on access to publicly available green space.  
I understood from a presentation by planning some time ago that they were planning on developing an indicator round this.  
This access is very important to wellbeing and something we understand much better after lockdowns.  
Please can you update on progress towards reporting on our population's access to greenspace?

Written response below provided on 3 August 2021  
Historically it has been a challenge to source quality data on publicly accessible green space, with previous national datasets excluding assets such as public rights of way and common land – which are clearly important for Herefordshire. Several new / improved sources have become available recently, however, and we are developing a page on the Understanding Herefordshire website which will link to them and explain what they show for the county. The initial web page will be live by the end of August but we will continue to further refine the content, and investigate the feasibility of developing more detailed local data to complement the national data. We will publish a news item when the page is live: interested parties can sign up for email updates [here](#).

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	<b>Name</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Committee</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Answer Provided By</b>
860	Councillor P Andrews	Herefordshire Council	Hereford City Centre Transport Package (HCCTP) - Development of the remaining elements	Cabinet	22/07/2021	Leader of the Council

<b>Text of question</b>	<b>Text of Answer</b>
When the link road was completed, the then Conservative Leader of the Council, Jonathan Lester, said it had been built on time and on budget. Was that true?	Thank you for that question. Once again it may be more appropriate to ask that question of Cllr Lester. My own view is that I have a high regard of Cllr Lester as someone who always attempts to speak accurately and truthfully on matters but I think it is not accurate to say that the road was built on time and on budget when we have not finished paying for it and costs associated with land purchases and Compulsory Purchase Orders have increased considerably. It may be he was not presented fully with the facts before he made such statements.
<b>Text of Supplementary Question (if any)</b>	<b>Text of Answer to Supplementary</b>

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	<b>Name</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Committee</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Answer Provided By</b>
859	Councillor W Wilding	Herefordshire Council	Hereford City Centre Transport Package (HCCTP) - Development of the remaining elements	Cabinet	22/07/2021	Cabinet Member - Infrastructure and Transport

<b>Text of question</b>	<b>Text of Answer</b>
<p>Ref the City Link Road.- Surely the point of the road connecting to a transport hub, is so we could provide active transport measures linking it to the city. At present this road doesn't have a dedicated cycle path. Why was this not designed into the original scheme?</p>	<p>Thank you Cllr Wilding, I concur with the opening part of your question but cannot answer the second. That is a question that should be asked of the previous Conservative Cabinet Member or the previous Leader of the Council.</p> <p>I do know that when the City Link Road was first being publicly discussed way back in 2009/10 much focus was given by the then Cabinet Member, Cllr Graham Powell, on what an important cycling route this would be – to and from the railway station and transport hub – but by the time we got to actual delivery we got a huge broad road with lost space in a central reservation and a shared cycle path dumped on the pavement. I cannot yet work out where along the process this change occurred or if it was originally always to be a substandard shared path on the pavement. We intend to revisit and improve this poor offering, which is no longer in compliance with the government's guidance, LTN 1/20, which says the government will no longer support shared pedestrian and cycle paths.</p>
<b>Text of Supplementary Question (if any)</b>	<b>Text of Answer to Supplementary</b>

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I thank Councillor Harrington for his answer, which suggests that we ask the previous conservative administration to explain: 1) how did they get the design and cost of this road so disastrously wrong, 2) two why did the design not reflect the need to encourage active travel measures linking to the station and 3) where did the money needed to create a modern travel hub go?

I can't necessarily answer that but because the thinkings of the previous administration are for themselves to explain or otherwise. I think in relation to your last question quite simply the money meant for active travel measures, including a decent cycle path if one was originally designed or planned and other elements, has gone on building the road or purchasing the land to build the road.

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	<b>Name</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Committee</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Answer Provided By</b>
858	Councillor T Bowes	Herefordshire Council	Concerns of deflected, misleading and dissembling responses from Officers and Politicians	Cabinet	22/07/2021	Cabinet Member - Infrastructure and Transport

<b>Text of question</b>	<b>Text of Answer</b>
<p>The questions and concerns being raised by Independents and It's Our County Councillors and by members of the public back in 2016 and 2017 should have led to these overspends being admitted to and action taken to address the ballooning project costs. How was it that their questions and concerns were allowed to be deflected with misleading and dissembling responses from Officers and Politicians?</p>	<p>Thank you Cllr Bowes, that is a fair question. I cannot say whether councillors or officers deliberately set out to mislead or dissemble in their responses but I can say it is my opinion that the Council historically has fallen short in giving clear and fair responses to questions from members of the public and councillors. However, I have full faith in the new Chief Executive's open, honest and robust approach to transparency.</p> <p>Looking forward, we as an administration have always tried to be as honest and open as possible when responding to councillor and public questions, no matter how embarrassing or otherwise those answers may be because if we are not always accountable to the public what is the point of being elected representatives of the public - being clear and transparent is the least tax payers can expect from us.</p>
<b>Text of Supplementary Question (if any)</b>	<b>Text of Answer to Supplementary</b>
<p>Thank you for your response and in the interests of transparency, are there any other areas of concern the public should be aware of?</p>	<p>I don't know if you mean just relating to the HCCTP or other areas. I think to be honest we're getting to the back of the cupboard of things that we need to tell the public about that have not been entirely transparently displayed in the past so nothing obvious, but if there is</p>



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	<p>it'll go into the public domain because we are publicly accountable. What's the point of being elected by the public to be accountable and the very first thing that we do is seek to protect our own reputation or the reputation even of a different administration? So if anything is looming - and we have always asked for things that were looming to be brought to us and that's why it was very disappointing that it took six months for me to be told that the compulsory purchase mechanism we used meant that we were going to overspend on the land purchases - we are pretty much assured that that won't happen again but in terms of what's in the cupboard I think the door was quite wide open at the moment and the lights in there.</p>
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	Name	Location	Topic	Committee	Date	Answer Provided By
856	Mr A Morawiecki	Breinton	Hereford City Centre Transport Package (HCCTP) - Development of the remaining elements	Cabinet	22/07/2021	Cabinet Member - Infrastructure and Transport

Text of question	Text of Answer
<p>A key decision was taken in Nov 2017 by the then Cabinet member for Infrastructure for the Director for Economy, Communities and Corporate be authorised to take all operational decisions necessary to progress detailed design and feasibility within the allocated budget of £563,000 identified in paragraph 24 for the professional fees associated with the remaining package elements of a transport hub and upgrading the existing highway from the junction of the City Link Road, along Commercial Road, Blue School Street to its junction with Widemarsh Street and Newmarket Street to inform further decisions. Where can the detailed design and feasibility work that was commissioned for the remainder of the project be found and who provided it and at what meeting of the council was this key decision made?</p>	<p>Some design development for the transport hub and public realm elements took place following the 2017 Cabinet Member decision to develop a concept design within an allocated budget of £563,000, please see my answer to Mr Palgrave. This work will be subject to a value for money exercise by this administration and those results will be shared with the public.</p> <p>I understand commencement of stakeholder engagement and consultation during the last administration was delayed as a result of the pre-election period for local and general elections in 2019. During this period further negotiations were ongoing with remaining land owners in relation to claims associated with land acquired by CPO. The need to review the budget in the light of this was identified in early 2020 and further detailed design works on the design were paused whilst this took place and therefore this concept design has not been published.</p> <p>This cabinet decision today will enable us to progress detailed design and consultation and to enable cost certainty to be established and further delivery funding sought to deliver the Transport Hub and to consider and delivery the public realm projects as part of a masterplan for the city.</p>

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<b>Text of Supplementary Question (if any)</b>	<b>Text of Answer to Supplementary</b>
<p>Thank you for the detailed response, though I note that the answer does not provide the information as to which council meeting in 2017 this key decision was taken. Please would you provide the date of the Herefordshire Council meeting at which the key decision to spend £563,000 was approved.</p> <p>My supplementary question is “As this was a key decision, and with the value being in excess of £500K, the design work should have gone out to competitive tender to assure Value for Money for the taxpayer. Where was the competitive tender advertised and if not, why not?”</p>	<p>A written response was promised to this question.</p>

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	Name	Location	Topic	Committee	Date	Answer Provided By
855	Mrs E Morawieka	Breinton	Hereford City Centre Transport Package (HCCTP) - Development of the remaining elements	Cabinet	22/07/2021	Cabinet Member - Finance and Corporate Services and planning

Text of question	Text of Answer
<p>The June 2016 SWAP report clearly showed budgets for the City Link Road at £27M and Hereford City Centre Transport Package at £13.6M. This SWAP report stated “It has been agreed, by the Head of Corporate Finance and Deputy Section 151 Officer that the relationship between the ‘Hereford City Link Road’ and ‘The Herefordshire City Centre Transport Package’ figures are explained in future reports, and that the categories of expenditure are coded to facilitate detailed reporting”.</p> <p>Despite this agreement, the previous administration maintained, even at CPO public inquiry, that at £34M the City Link Road was within budget and left sufficient funds to complete the entire project. After requests from the public and opposition councillors to urgently review the detailed spend and budget on this project which were repeatedly rejected, what action can be taken against those who deliberately mislead?</p>	<p>I share your concern that we need to understand how money has been spent on this project and I asked the same question when I was in opposition. As you can see from the papers, there is a recommendation that our internal audit team carry out an audit of the expenditure and of the cost escalation. I fully support this recommendation and it will enable the spotlight of public examination to be shone on the spend on this project. Once this has been carried out, the chief executive will consider if there are any further actions to be followed.</p>
Text of Supplementary Question (if any)	Text of Answer to Supplementary

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I would like to thank Councillor Harvey for her response. I appreciate the work and efforts Councillor Harvey put in over many years to try and obtain good project management and tight budgetary control on large capital projects. However, the SWAP report on Blueschool house seemed to make little to no difference as to how capital budgets were managed by the previous administration. The current report on the City Link Road appears to indicate that no lessons were learned from that SWAP report.

What reassurance can the public receive that money spent on a further SWAP report on the City Link Road, will actually change the culture and management of public money in Herefordshire to better ensure that there is robust financial management, and that the Council will obtain value for money for local taxpayers?

I can understand that members of the public listening will be wondering what it is that needs to be done in order to learn lessons like these. I think all that I can say is that there are different hands on the tiller now, we are a different administration to the one under which these issues were generated. We also have a new chief executive who is sending very strong messages to officers about his expectations in terms of how projects are to be delivered and how capital programs are to be managed, we have a section 151 officer who is all over the finances and is keeping a very tight control on how we release funds and under what conditions we start projects going. I think with those three differences coming together in a positive and reinforcing fashion I hope that we will not find ourselves in this position again and that lessons will be learned and they are being learned and that we can make sure that the projects under our control now are delivered in an organised timely and financially controlled fashion.

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	<b>Name</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Committee</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Answer Provided By</b>
854	Mr T Meadows	Belmont	Hereford City Centre Transport Package (HCCTP) - Development of the remaining elements	Cabinet	22/07/2021	Cabinet Member - Infrastructure and Transport

<b>Text of question</b>	<b>Text of Answer</b>
<p>Did the previous Conservative Administration let the public know that the road we are using today was not yet fully paid for?</p>	<p>Thank you for that. That is a good question and perhaps one for the previous Cabinet Member or former Leader of the Council under the Conservatives to answer. The short answer is I suspect not, I have certainly not ever heard a member of the previous administration admit that whilst the road has been physically built (at considerably more cost than projected) outstanding costs have not been fully paid and closed off. The costs are associated with a number of landowner payments where agreement on value of their land has not yet been reached.</p> <p>What is now clear is that the increases in City Link Road land costs and forecast increase in professional fees set out in the cabinet report have diminished the budget available to deliver the key sustainable travel elements of the transport package, the Transport Hub and Public Realm works which are contractual commitments to the Marches LEP. This cabinet decision will enable us to progress and to enable cost certainty to be established and further delivery funding sought to deliver the Transport Hub and to consider and delivery the public realm projects as part of a masterplan for the city.</p>
<b>Text of Supplementary Question (if any)</b>	<b>Text of Answer to Supplementary</b>

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When did you as a new administration become aware that the city link road wasn't actually paid for?

Not immediately strangely enough. You would think as the cabinet member I would have been made aware of that fairly quickly but it was about six months into my tenure that it was discovered, partly because we had started an investigation into the project management and the financial accounts of the road.

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	Name	Location	Topic	Committee	Date	Answer Provided By
853	Mrs V Wegg-Prosser	Breinton	Hereford City Centre Transport Package (HCCTP) - Development of the remaining elements	Cabinet	22/07/2021	Cabinet Member - Infrastructure and Transport

Text of question	Text of Answer
<p>While welcoming the HCCTP Update published on the Council's News site on Wednesday 14 July, and the Chief Executive's unreserved apology for management and communications failures throughout the project, there are nevertheless serious concerns which need to be addressed.</p> <p>The land acquisition costs for the HCCTP had an £11.135M estimate in the 2015 business case. The forecast land acquisition costs as at January 2021 (worst case scenario) have an estimate of £17.75M - an increase of £6.615M (less £1.5M if best case scenario is achieved by the settlement deadline of 31.12.2021).</p> <p>The Council appeared to justify this more than 50% increase by claiming that they had procured more land than was originally envisaged for the City Link Road route. Using these figures, how much per acre acquired is the cost of this extra land - best and worst case scenario?</p>	<p>I understand the increase in land cost has arisen from a number of factors not just the acquisition of additional land. Land beyond that required for the City Link Road was included in the original CPO for regeneration purposes. An important element of the proposed SWAP audit is to understand how land acquisition decisions were made because to date it is not clear to me what governance was in place for those decisions to be made.</p> <p>In addition, following confirmation of the orders, I believe one plot the owner exercised their statutory right to require the Council to acquire the full plot resulting in an increase in land acquired beyond the original CPO.</p> <p>Other land cost increases have resulted from increased costs associated with land included in the original CPO from factors including; disturbance costs for the legal interests in the land and increases in agent and legal fees.</p> <p>On this basis the allocation of cost against the land beyond that required for the road is not an appropriate calculation, given as outlined above the cost increases are not solely attributable to this element. The land acquired was not intended to be solely for the construction of the road, but to support the realisation of city centre regeneration. To date this has included providing student</p>



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	accommodation to support the development of NMITE & Hereford College of Arts, and the station medical centre providing improved healthcare facilities for local residents. The balance of the land which is additional to the land required to deliver the City Link Road is available for further regeneration projects including the provision of housing and green spaces within this area of the city
<b>Text of Supplementary Question (if any)</b>	<b>Text of Answer to Supplementary</b>

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	Name	Location	Topic	Committee	Date	Answer Provided By
852	Mr R Palgrave	How Caple	Hereford City Centre Transport Package (HCCTP) - Development of the remaining elements	Cabinet	22/07/2021	Cabinet Member - Infrastructure and Transport

Text of question	Text of Answer
<p>Recommendation d) in the Cabinet report for 22 July is to re-allocate the remaining HCCTP programme funding to developing the transport hub project design and consultation so that cost certainty can be established and further delivery funding sought. This is a welcome step: however the meeting papers don't disclose how much that re-allocated funding amounts to. Back in November 2017, the then Cabinet authorised the Director for Economy, Communities and Corporate to "take all operational decisions necessary to progress detailed design and feasibility within an allocated budget of £563k for the delivery of the Transport Hub and ATM element of the package." Can we hear today how much of this £563k has been spent, what it has delivered, and how much more money is needed to complete the designs?</p>	<p>I understand that to date £297k of the original £563k Transport Hub and Public Realm professional fees budget has been spent on concept design development. This work was carried out by BBLP and will be subject to a value for money review by this administration. It is anticipated that the remaining balance will be insufficient to complete the remaining works required but that there will be sufficient funds available in the overall budget to undertake the detailed design work which is essential for us to complete in order for us to understand the further funding we will need to secure the delivery of a fit for purpose, modern 21st Century transport hub for the City. This decision today would allow to proceed on that basis.</p>
Text of Supplementary Question (if any)	Text of Answer to Supplementary
<p>The HCCTP business case from November 2015 stated that new trees and shrubs would be planted along the CLR to compensate for the loss of greenery associated with the scheme. Also that the then design of the Transport Hub included the introduction of resin bound footways and the planting of new trees in the station's forecourt. Have</p>	<p>No I don't think the commitment has been met yet but then neither has the delivery or velocity outcomes that were promised at this point. I can assure you that as an administration we intend to plant a huge amount of greenery and plant trees hopefully along both the city link road and directly outside the station but in actual fact we are discussing whether or not we would have an apple orchard outside of</p>

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the CLR trees been planted and is the commitment to plant trees in in the station forecourt going to be met?

the train station. What better way to arrive in Hereford than to walk outside instead of seeing over-engineered metal sculpture or block work that's highly expensive and not particularly any more useful than a normal surface and instead see a garden in front of you or specimen orchard to be able to greet you and link you into town. That's something we will definitely be concentration on.

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	<b>Name</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Committee</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Answer Provided By</b>
851	Ms J Furniss	Hereford	Development Sites	Cabinet	22/07/2021	Cabinet Member - Finance and Corporate Services and planning

<b>Text of question</b>	<b>Text of Answer</b>
<p>What are the reasons recorded or given, for why the previous Conservative led administration chose a valuation and payment method for CPO landblocks, which allowed landowners a six-year window to argue the final cost?</p>	<p>The council used compulsory purchase powers to acquire land for the City Link Road. This enabled land to be assembled using statutory powers if it could not be acquired by agreement / negotiation. It is the CPO process under the Limitations Act 1980 that provides the six year period for the claimants to submit claims to the council and for the parties to reach an agreed value for the final claim payments. Whilst most of the land acquisition payments have been agreed and paid there are a small number of landowners where final valuation and payments are still being discussed to reach agreement. The CPO route provides the council with certainty on the ability to acquire the necessary land in a defined timescale and within a prescribed legal framework of costs that are payable. It is therefore normal practice to instigate a CPO process such that the project can proceed as planned, even for plots where a negotiated purchase is underway. This approach provides risk mitigation against land acquisition.</p>
<b>Text of Supplementary Question (if any)</b>	<b>Text of Answer to Supplementary</b>



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	Name	Location	Topic	Committee	Date	Answer Provided By
850	Mr M Willmont	Hereford	Hereford City Centre Transport Package (HCCTP) - Development of the remaining elements	Cabinet	22/07/2021	Cabinet Member - Infrastructure and Transport

Text of question	Text of Answer
<p>Path at Saracens Head Hereford</p> <p>This section of path has now been closed to the public for well over a year.</p> <p>Can the appropriate Cabinet Member explain in detail why the repairs are delayed and when the path will be re-opened. If it is a question of responsibility for the work, given the importance of the path, why have the Council not carried out the work and argued about the responsibility/cost afterwards?</p>	<p>Thank you Mr Willmont, I do agree we need to reopen this path as soon as possible and have been pushing on this regularly since its closure. This a complicated one. The path is supported by the adjacent buildings connected to the pub and we needed to establish the condition of the supports and what the appropriate repair works are that need to be done by the building owner and the council. There was a considerable delay caused by differences of opinion of ownership and who was responsible for the works. This has been amicably resolved and some shoring works have been done by the owners, allowing us to then assess the integrity of the Victorian concrete supporting beam. This took time and there is no simple solution to this repair. A survey was needed due to the age and condition of the path and the supporting beams and specialised contractors were required to undertake the survey, which we could not do outside certain times due to river levels and the need to work from the river. We undertook a preliminary survey last year. The extensive survey of the beams is programmed to be complete next week. The information will then be collated and modelled. As soon as we have the condition confirmed we will be able to take the next steps to repair and reopen the path. I anticipate this will be within the next 6 weeks.</p>

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<b>Text of Supplementary Question (if any)</b>	<b>Text of Answer to Supplementary</b>

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	Name	Location	Topic	Committee	Date	Answer Provided By
849	Dr N Geeson	Hereford	Hereford City Centre Transport Package (HCCTP) - Development of the remaining elements	Cabinet	22/07/2021	Cabinet Member - Infrastructure and Transport

Text of question	Text of Answer
<p>Last winter I photographed and mapped numerous winter springs and streams that input to the Yazor Brooks floodplain from slopes above. These, and therefore their implications for increased flood risk, are not mentioned in any Council reports supporting planning applications, e.g. at Three Elms or along the City Link Road. They do not seem to have been included in any modelling. To reduce flood risk it will be good if the site opposite the new medical centre is left as a sink, as an urban wetland park, but even with that site left open the 2012 Flood Alleviation Scheme has not protected e.g. Merton Meadows from flooding (e.g. 2012, 2019/20). Please can we be assured that there will be a comprehensive review of flood risk strategy for Hereford City, especially before more buildings are built along the City Link Road?</p>	<p>Thank you Dr Geeson for this question and your considerable interest and efforts in highlighting the effects of the Yazor brook and its tributaries on flooding in and around the City. I am aware that you raised this matter with me directly by email earlier this month and I have shared this with Cllr Harvey who has responsibility for planning and updating the Core Strategy. I have asked officers to look into this matter and liaise with you and provide a briefing to myself and Cllr Harvey. We will then be able to provide a more detailed response to you. Please be assured that any planned development (including any along the City Link Road) would need to produce an up to date and comprehensive flood risk assessment for consideration by the planning authority. With regard to your suggestion of an urban sink being left to help mitigate the effects of any flooding, please see my response to Mr Morfett, we support this approach as a new administration.</p>
Text of Supplementary Question (if any)	Text of Answer to Supplementary





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	Name	Location	Topic	Committee	Date	Answer Provided By
848	Mr E Morfett	Breinton	Development Sites	Cabinet	22/07/2021	Cabinet Member - Infrastructure and Transport

Text of question	Text of Answer
<p>Despite years of work to access development sites in the City, nobody surveyed the groundwater flow rates under the Essex Arms site. This is extraordinary given that the natural gravel aquifers, 1.5m to 3m thick are so close to surface and the site regularly floods. I understand that Avara and Heineken extract millions of gallons of groundwater from the City aquifer. This is in an extensive buried river channel that flows East from Three Elms underlying much of the proposed development areas in the City.</p> <p>I would like to ask what are the flood management plans in the event of cessation of groundwater abstraction by some or all of commercial operations? How much would the groundwater levels rise and how would this affect seasonal surface water flooding? Would the County Council be liable for pumping costs to protect low-lying developments?</p>	<p>Thank you for your question Mr Morfett. I am told that assessment of groundwater formed part of the geo-environmental investigation for the City Link Road that was understood to be sufficient for the development of that project.</p> <p>During 2019/20 an Integrated Catchment Strategy was completed. A copy of this can be provided. This study did not consider groundwater monitoring at the time but it should be noted that the Edgar Street area is governed primarily by the channel capacity of the Widemarsh Brook. The provision of groundwater flow data would not have brought any tangible benefit to the accuracy of the Widemarsh Brook hydraulic model, so there would not have been any benefit to completing groundwater monitoring. Although there are some basements within properties located within the Edgar Street grid area of Hereford, groundwater flood risk is governed by the level of the receiving watercourse which in most cases is lower than adjacent property.</p> <p>It is worth noting that the Essex Arms Site and other low lying sites in the surrounding area such as the Merton Meadow area are also at risk of fluvial flooding from the Widemarsh Brook. The Flood Risk Assessment prepared for the City Link Road identified the need to raise ground levels in these low lying plots to mitigate the fluvial flood risk in the hope that such ground raising would also mitigate groundwater flood risk in these sites. It is our view as a new administration that a more natural solution can be found to mitigating</p>

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	<p>the flood risk here, by allowing a City wetland to be developed on the Essex Arms site for example, as well as attenuation measures that would be more practical and considerably cheaper than raising ground levels, with all the considerable cost and risk that would bring.</p>
<p><b>Text of Supplementary Question (if any)</b></p>	<p><b>Text of Answer to Supplementary</b></p>
<p>Thank you for your response to my question on groundwater levels beneath the City Link Road and groundwater flow rates under the Essex Arms Site. I am heartened to hear that the development of our Natural Capital in the form of a City Wetland Wildlife Reserve with ponds for the flood alleviation will be considered in the scheme. My question remains unanswered on the impact of water abstraction by Heineken and Avara on water levels in the proposed development areas. It is a technical due diligence question that relates to flood management over a major development site. Engineers have calculated the need to raise ground levels but we don't know the impact on groundwater levels if commercial water abstraction ceased. The chances are, like many flood zones, that a combination of exceptional surface and subsurface flows could combine to create exceptional flooding conditions. The main river rises almost 7m in exceptional floods and the City Groundwater level also rises. Did the planners overlook the very high water volumes pumped out of the City aquifer and the impact, if pumping ceased, on the peak groundwater levels across the development site?</p>	<p>That is a very technical question which I can't answer in the room. Your general point – was enough due diligence given to the impacts of flooding on that area through the Yazor Brook, did we do enough mitigation – my personal view is that we haven't yet done enough mitigation if we were to continue with previous plans but we are not continuing with some of the plans for the development of the site. A detailed written answer was promised to this question.</p>

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	Name	Location	Topic	Committee	Date	Answer Provided By
847	Mrs C Palgrave	How Caple	Hereford City Centre Transport Package (HCCTP) - Development of the remaining elements	Cabinet	22/07/2021	Cabinet Member - Infrastructure and Transport

Text of question	Text of Answer
<p>I must praise this council administration for being open and transparent about the legacy of overspend and poor project management they inherited in May 2019. I would like to know what impact the approximate £6m overspend on the City Link Road will have on the delivery of other elements of the HCCTP, namely the Transport Hub, new cycling and pedestrian spaces, public realm works on Commercial Road, Blueschool Street and Newmarket Street and crucially, flood defence work to protect the Edgar Street Grid? Given the horrendous flooding in Western Europe this month, I think it is essential the Council do not delay or scale back adaptations to protect Hereford from a similar fate.</p>	<p>Thank you for your question Mr Palgrave and can I take this opportunity to thank you and others for your long and continued interest in getting the City a transport hub that is modern, fit for purpose and truly reflective of the need for local authorities to respond to government direction to support alternative means of transport and meaningful modal shift on our networks. The short answer is the hub that you and I and many others would like to see will not be delivered without further funding being sought, however please see my answer to Mr Bridges. We are committed to delivering the remaining elements of the project as they are a core element of the Council's plans for a 21st century transport strategy in the city of Hereford and will make sure we get the very best in modern and efficient design. I do not intend to scale back the scope of the transport hub or public realm projects, in fact this delayed start may allow us to be even more ambitious in design (and more judicious in further spending).</p>
Text of Supplementary Question (if any)	Text of Answer to Supplementary

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	<b>Name</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Committee</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Answer Provided By</b>
846	Mr P Rudd	Hereford	Blue School House	Cabinet	22/07/2021	Cabinet Member - Finance and Corporate Services and planning

<b>Text of question</b>	<b>Text of Answer</b>
In 2017 the £1m overspend on the Blueschool House project budget was found to have involved officers acting beyond their delegations and outside of the requirements of the council's constitutional Financial Regulations. Has an investigation of officer actions taken place in this instance too and if so, have any of the council's procedures, regulations or authorities been breached upon this occasion?	As you can see from the agenda, the recommendation is that SWAP carry out an audit of expenditure and how the costs escalated. Their work will be reported to the Audit and Governance committee. In addition, the Chief Executive will use the report to consider what steps are taken in terms of officers.
<b>Text of Supplementary Question (if any)</b>	<b>Text of Answer to Supplementary</b>

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	<b>Name</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Committee</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Answer Provided By</b>
845	Mr A Bridges	Herefordshire	University	Cabinet	22/07/2021	Cabinet Member - Infrastructure and Transport

<b>Text of question</b>	<b>Text of Answer</b>
<p>In 2018 in a review by Historic England they stated they were shocked that in ten years nothing had been done to create a high-quality public space in front of the railway station. They expected the Council to have a long-term transport strategy looking to encourage the use of modes other than the private car. That included public transport for the workforce, the students, and their families hoping to make a real success of the new University, then thought to be opening in 2019. We are now in 2021, so what is happen-ing?</p>	<p>Thank you for your question, it is interesting that a body such as Historic England should make such a comment, I am sure many of us in the County were struck at how beautiful the station looked when the industrial buildings at Station Approach were knocked down and how lacking in good pedestrian and cycling connectivity that area is. I am determined that a design for the transport hub does not obscure this vista but celebrates it. I am also conscious that currently the environment around the station is bleak and uninviting and opportunities were not taken to put in a segregated cycle lane, better pedestrian crossing points or decent green landscaping when the City Link Road was built. I hope that will be rectified by the soon to be recommenced and long awaited design of the hub and improvements to the public realm here.</p> <p>For clarity and background, some very early design development for the transport hub and public realm elements was produced by BBLP following the completion of the City Link Road (CLR) after the 2017 Cabinet Member decision to develop a concept design.</p> <p>Commencement of stakeholder engagement and consultation was delayed as a result of the pre-election period for local and general elections in 2019. During this period further negotiations were ongoing with remaining land owners in relation to claims associated with land acquired by Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) for the CLR. The need to review the budget in the light of this was raised with me in early 2020 and further works on the design had to be</p>

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	<p>paused whilst this took place. I do not think this early concept work reflected the ambitions of the new administration nor grasped the opportunities we have here to create a transport hub that is both efficient in design and respectful of our historic railway building. We will be reviewing the early work by BBLP to ensure value for money was achieved.</p> <p>I am committed to the delivery of the remaining elements of the project as they are a core element of to the Council's plan for transport in the city of Hereford. It is disappointing that these elements have not substantially progressed to date and that lack of clarity over remaining budget, the increases in land costs and forecast increase in professional fees have diminished the original capital available to deliver these key elements of the transport package. This decision, should enable us to progress the design and consultation so that we can have certainty on how much further funding we will need to find to deliver the Transport Hub. There will be meaningful opportunities for stakeholders and residents to feed into this work so we get the very best fit for our station, hub and City.</p>
<p><b>Text of Supplementary Question (if any)</b></p>	<p><b>Text of Answer to Supplementary</b></p>
<p>Councillor Harrington, thank you for the detailed response which is most appreciated. As you are aware the access and egress to the railway station is currently one way in and out and causes all sorts of traffic issues with the junction of Morrisons. As part of the design work there needs to be a better flowing system for traffic for all modes of transport as the current design layout just doesn't work today. Can we please ensure that as part of the works there is more than one way in and out of the new transport hub and also remove the traffic lights and replace with roundabouts, otherwise it will just</p>	<p>It's a very good point which has been raised by many other people. At the moment we don't have a design, as we'll discover as we talk through this meeting today but the idea that we would only have one access point has been something that's been discounted by myself. So two access points, an entrance and an exit is the direction that we'll be giving to our designers.</p>



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become more of a bottleneck and will not resolve what is trying to be achieved.	
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	<b>Name</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Committee</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Answer Provided By</b>
844	Ms J Liddle	Ledbury	West Mercia Rape and Sexual Abuse Support Centre (WMRSASC)	Cabinet	22/07/2021	Cabinet Member - Health and Wellbeing

<b>Text of question</b>	<b>Text of Answer</b>
<p>West Mercia Rape and Sexual Abuse Support Centre (WMRSASC) has had to close its waiting list for referrals for counselling due to lack of funding. I appreciate that the Council have found emergency funding for three months. This is an essential service, taking referrals from a variety of settings, including NHS, GPs, social care and the police. It provides support and help for women, men and children aged 5+ who are impacted by sexual and domestic violence. There is currently a long waiting list and referrals have to wait for 18 months to be seen. Can the Cabinet say how it intends to work with strategic partners to find a longer term funding solution, so that the WMRSASC services are resilient, and not dependent on grant funding.</p>	<p>This regional service is not one which the council has commissioned in the past. The council is therefore having discussions with WMRSASC, in conjunction with Worcestershire County Council, to understand the current risk to services and the population need and clarifying how quality and sustainability of provision could be secured. This will also involve partners including Police and Herefordshire, Worcestershire CCG and other NHS organisations. The council recognises the importance of ensuring appropriate support for victims of sexual violence and will work to help find solutions.</p>
<b>Text of Supplementary Question (if any)</b>	<b>Text of Answer to Supplementary</b>

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	Name	Location	Topic	Committee	Date	Answer Provided By
843	Mrs C Protherough	Birch Hill	Uncovered Projects by the collation	Cabinet	24/06/2021	Leader of the Council

Text of question	Text of Answer
<p>Since 2019 the current Coalition has uncovered horrendously botched projects</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Total un-deliverability of the South Wye Transport Package's SLR, resulting from botched procurement. Tens of millions of pounds were returned to the LEP;</li> <li>• £220k wasted attempting unnecessary, undeliverable housing development of the old Bromyard Depot, including financial bullying and intimidation of neighbours and agricultural tenants on the site;</li> <li>• Chronic and Systemic failures to safeguard and protect children in the council's care over more than a decade;</li> <li>• The Audit &amp; Governance Committee warned to expect a qualified opinion for the 2019 accounts due to an inability to demonstrate Value for Money from work passed to BBLP without competition</li> <li>• Failure to sign off the council's accounts since 2016, due to an outstanding Value for Money issue which remains veiled in secrecy.</li> </ul> <p>What else should the public know about?</p>	<p>Thank you for the question, when we came into office we were committed to ensuring that issues that arise when the council have got things wrong we are open and transparent about the problems, this commitment has not changed. We will not shy away from difficult issues and as you will see from the agenda today, we are sharing an issue in respect of the Hereford City Centre Transport program. The recommendations show how we are proposing to bring transparency by commissioning a South West Audit Partnership (SWAP) audit of the expenditure on the HCCTP programme to understand the cost escalation; the remaining programme funding be allocated to the development of the transport hub project design and consultation and the Interim Director for Economy and Place (in consultation with the Section 151 officer and the Cabinet Member for Infrastructure and Transport) is authorised to progress this design and consultation to enable cost certainty to be established and further delivery funding sought; and the public realm projects in the HCCTP be considered in a wider assessment of public realm and sustainable connectivity in the City and delivered as individual projects under the wider strategy ensuring the LEP objectives are delivered.</p>
Text of Supplementary Question (if any)	Text of Answer to Supplementary

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	Name	Location	Topic	Committee	Date	Answer Provided By
842	Councillor W Wilding	Herefordshire Council	Hereford Transport Strategy	Cabinet	24/06/2021	Cabinet Member - Infrastructure and Transport

Text of question	Text of Answer
<p>In reference to package A - the active travel measures could you tell us when specific parts of this programme will be operational. In particular, with school travel plans. When will we actually see measures introduced to encourage an increase in students using public or school transport and with the 'Behaviour Change Programme', can you indicate what a comprehensive campaign would include and begin.</p>	<p>The expansion of school travel plan support to cover market towns will be funded by the government's Capability Fund which should be confirmed by the end of June. On this basis we would expect to commission consultant support and be able to support schools to review and update their travel plans from September onwards through the year. This funding is also due to support a walk to school programme promoting walking for Hereford and market town schools. A number of active travel measures are already progressing and these will inform the range of activities which schools can benefit from including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pedestrian training for primary school children</li> <li>• Bikeability cycle training – includes in school training, holiday activities and adult cycle training</li> <li>• School travel grant scheme (schools can access funding cycle and scooter parking)</li> <li>• School e-cargo bikes – As part of the Towns Fund we purchased 27 e-cargo bikes which are designed for commuting to school. Here we will be offering these on trial, free of charge to schools or directly to parents, to encourage behaviour change. If parents are keen to permanently purchase a bike themselves we aim to help facilitate that by, for ex-ample, amongst other avenues, working with them and low or no interest loan providers.</li> </ul> <p>Encouraging students and other riders back onto public transport will form part of the campaign to encourage behaviour change and</p>

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	<p>support the recovery from covid. We will need to develop the messaging around this with regard to the government guidance on social distancing and will look to coordinate with government's planned national campaign to encourage people to get back on buses which was announced in the National Bus Strategy. Our intention will be to commission the support to develop and deliver this campaign as soon as possible following cabinet's determination.</p>
<p><b>Text of Supplementary Question (if any)</b></p>	<p><b>Text of Answer to Supplementary</b></p>
<p>Thank you for your answers. I welcome the news on school transport and behaviour change. Like us the vast majority of councils have declared climate emergencies and developed plans to get to zero carbon, but only 3 or 4 have clear and obvious links to these plans on their websites. Sadly Herefordshire is not one of those. So, can we have assurance that the need to communicate to residents our commitment to zero carbon is of the utmost importance, because it leads to behaviour change. Can I request that we insist on clearer and more obvious links and regular top banner headlines on the council website. Can I also ask that we plan a big push later this year when COP26 happens.</p>	<p>Thank you Councillor Wilding for your question and I can confirm that a paper will be coming to Cabinet I hope at the end of July which will make proposals for the use of the climate reserve including setting aside funding for a major communications campaign so watch this space on that and I agree with you that very strong county-wide messaging on the need for urgent climate action will be important in line with the upcoming conference in Glasgow at the end of the year</p>

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	<b>Name</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Committee</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Answer Provided By</b>
840	Mrs E Morawieka	Breinton	Hereford Transport Strategy	Cabinet	24/06/2021	Cabinet Member - Infrastructure and Transport

<b>Text of question</b>	<b>Text of Answer</b>
<p>The detailed cost analysis of the Hereford Transport Strategy is to be welcomed and shows exactly the funding needed for different transport elements and modes. This is much clearer to control budgets and assess Value for Money than the previously aggregated transport schemes, such as the Hereford City Centre Transport Package, where the City Link Rd was merged with projects where money had been allocated for public realm, cycle infrastructure and a transport hub. With Active Travel schemes delivering wide benefits around health, wellbeing, independence, environment, economic and climate and giving higher dividends than new road schemes, it would be helpful in understanding the benefits of each of these options as well as their costs. Where are the detailed benefits of each of the options to be found please?</p>	<p>The impacts (beneficial and adverse) of different transport options and packages of options were considered during the Hereford Transport Strategy Review to enable cabinet to determine its preferred overall strategy.</p> <p>Package A, which comprised the active travel options, was assessed as having mainly large beneficial impacts across the 4 key objectives – climate emergency, economy, environment and society. This can be seen in the technical report at appendix 1 of the cabinet papers. The radar diagram on page 75 of the report provides a visual indication of performance and page 76 summarises the impacts. All of the options considered in the Review were assessed individually and the details of the assessment outcomes are set out on pages 101 to 118 of the technical report.</p>
<b>Text of Supplementary Question (if any)</b>	<b>Text of Answer to Supplementary</b>

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	Name	Location	Topic	Committee	Date	Answer Provided By
839	Mrs V Wegg-Prosser	Breinton	Hereford Transport Strategy	Cabinet	24/06/2021	Cabinet Member - Infrastructure and Transport

Text of question	Text of Answer
<p>Reference agenda item 6, Hereford Transport Strategy, my question concerns Table 1, Packages A and B, committed transport allocations for 2021/22, and the railway station hub. This is part of the fully-funded Hereford City Centre Transport Package. Its business case was agreed in November 2015, its City Link Road was built, but its essential Sustainable Transport Measures have yet to be implemented as regards the transport hub. Since 2009 English Heritage (now Heritage England) have been shocked by the Council's failure to proceed with an upgrade of the transport options at the railway station. It is truly shaming. What scope is there for hastening the construction of this hub using additional monies from the Stronger Towns fund and the national bus strategy revenue/capital source, as well as from the minimal sum of money mentioned in this Report?</p>	<p>This administration is committed to progressing delivery of these capital projects. We are currently increasing resource and capacity to accelerate the delivery of key projects such as the transport hub. The transport hub already has capital funding in place to progress as part of the Hereford City Centre Package. A report is due to be considered by cabinet in July to confirm the next steps to progress the initial design, consultation and construction costing for the Transport Hub and public realm on Commercial Road, Blueschool St and Newmarket St.</p> <p>Problems we have inherited from the last administration, which will be discussed in detail at cabinet in July, make it extremely likely that we will need to seek to secure additional capital funds in order to deliver the package. We shall know better the scale of these additional funds when we have confirmed detailed costs and designs for the outstanding projects.</p>
Text of Supplementary Question (if any)	Text of Answer to Supplementary
<p>Thank you for this response to my question.</p> <p>I note in your reply to Q 4 that you "anticipate recommencing detailed work for the delivery of the transport hub" and yet in your reply to my Q5 you indicate that "additional capital funds" may be required for this purpose. I asked if the Stronger Towns and national bus strategy Funds could be accessed to speed up delivery of the transport hub.</p>	<p>The short answer is that we will have to reassess the budget. We won't be accessing the funds that she's referenced but we will have to do a piece of work which we're doing now to understand where the budget lies as I indicated in that reply there'll be a separate report coming shortly to cabinet to fully explain the situation in regards to the city centre transport package and part of that will explain what budget</p>



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Can you confirm that such funds will not be accessed to finance previous overcosts on the City Link Road element of the HCCTP, and that remaining sums of money earmarked for the transport hub from the original £40m HCCTP budget will also not be accessed for that purpose?

is left and where we will have to seek further funding but we are utterly committed to delivering the transport hub, improvements to Commercial Street, New Market and Blue School Street and all the other outcomes identified in that package

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	Name	Location	Topic	Committee	Date	Answer Provided By
838	Dr N Geeson	Hereford	Cycle schemes	Cabinet	24/06/2021	Cabinet Member - Infrastructure and Transport

Text of question	Text of Answer
<p>Every cyclist is likely to be one fewer car, with no emissions, and no road congestion. So, promoting cycling must be a priority. I read about Cycle schemes for St Owen Street, Holme Lacy Road, Aylestone Hill to be delivered 2021/22, but wonder what else could also be achieved rapidly, with segregation barriers and judicious imagination. I would love to ride my bike into town from Kings Acre, but cannot find a complete safe route. Being overtaken very closely on Kings Acre Road while also avoiding putting a wheel down a drain is too terrifying. Closer to town, the back streets around Whitecross are navigable, but then there is nowhere obvious to cross the A49 and ride safely to the town centre. What can be done to provide some of the key missing cycling connections much more quickly?</p>	<p>Following the adoption of the Hereford Transport Strategy we will progress at pace the development of a cycling and walking masterplan for the city, whilst continuing to assess in parallel what practical measures that could be implemented for quicker results. We will have, if the decision taken by the Cabinet supports this, a significant increase in precious revenue which will allow us to collate the information needed and to control that process more tightly than we traditionally have done. This revenue will support extra Herefordshire Council staff who are experienced in project management and delivery and will provide much needed support to our existing teams. The Kings Acre/Whitecross road route into the central area referred to in your question is a priority because the demand for a good east west cycle route is high and good east west routes are not easily found in the City. The aim of the masterplan work will be to set out a pipeline of schemes to support funding bids to government by the end of the current financial year.</p> <p>This financial year we also anticipate recommencing detailed work for the delivery of the transport hub and public realm improvements on Commercial Road and Blueschool Street to improve integration between rail, bus and active modes, as well as completing cycle schemes on St Owen Street, Holme Lacy Road and Aylestone Hill. We have also been in discussion with Highways England through its designated funds programme to look to secure funding and support for improved crossings for pedestrians and cyclists along the A49</p>

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	corridor through the city. We will continue to pursue this funding opportunity and our masterplan, even in early draft stages, will help us to make coherent and attractive bids for capital funding from government agencies and departments.
<b>Text of Supplementary Question (if any)</b>	<b>Text of Answer to Supplementary</b>

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	Name	Location	Topic	Committee	Date	Answer Provided By
837	Mr M Willmont	Hereford	Scaffolding at Jacobs Court	Cabinet	24/06/2021	Cabinet Member - Commissioning, procurement and assets

Text of question	Text of Answer
<p>Will the appropriate Cabinet Member explain why the Council continues to pay for scaffolding at the above [Jacobs Court, Commercial Road] privately owned building, how much it has cost to date, when it will end and will we get the money back?</p>	<p>Jacobs Court has a long convoluted history. It has been approx. 10 years since the structure was deemed dangerous and scaffold erected, to protect the structure and glazing, which has remained in situ ever since.</p> <p>Due to their historically being no resident management company the tower and communal areas fell to the crown. Due to concerns over the deterioration of the scaffold and the health and safety requirements monthly scaffold inspections were commissioned in 2015 at a cost of £400 + vat pcm ((£400x 12) 6years = £28k.) There is a charge on the property in relation to the dangerous structure and the initial cost of the scaffold erection of (£32 890 + vat) which we hope to use as a mechanism to recoup the ongoing expenditure.</p> <p>We are now currently in talks with the newly reformed residents management company to try and resolve this, which we hope will finally end the ongoing costs.</p>
Text of Supplementary Question (if any)	Text of Answer to Supplementary
<p>The reply quotes a cost for the erection of the scaffold and the monthly inspection charge. As there is no figure given for any ongoing cost of hiring of the scaffolding this implies that it is owned by the Council. Please confirm that this is the case and if so the</p>	<p>Written response: There was no initial charge for the hire of the scaffold as this was part of the original negotiation. We have never paid a hire charge, there will however be a cost to dismantle the scaffold and or to purchase it</p>

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purchase price. If not what is the ongoing cost for the hiring of the scaffolding. Whilst there is a charge on the property for the initial cost of the scaffold will the monthly payments and any purchase price or ongoing hiring charge be added to this?

as the scaffold company will not be able to reuse the scaffold once removed. There is a mechanism available to recharge expenditure to the property management company.

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	Name	Location	Topic	Committee	Date	Answer Provided By
836	Ms J Suter	Leominster	Pavements/streets of Leominster Town	Cabinet	24/06/2021	Cabinet Member - Transport and Roads

Text of question	Text of Answer
<p>I return to the question of the state of the pavements/streets of Leominster Town. Passing the buck to “reduced investment” does not cut it with me. I can only assume you travel the town by hovercraft! Your reply to my previous question stated that you regularly inspect and repair as necessary. Can I ask when and where the most recent and satisfactory repairs have been made. The “repairs” carried out in West St. have not lasted and the road is as bumpy and uneven as ever. The turning from High St into Corn Square via Victoria St is appalling. Money continues to be spent on unnecessary “improvements” to increase tourist trade but will people really come to our town to look at new waste bins and signage when everything else is so run down. I know the money came from a grant but that money came from us the tax payers it did not materialise out of thin air! Don’t blame the government for everything you cannot continually ignore problems and hope they will resolve themselves.</p>	<p>Thank you for your question. I can tell you I don’t have a hovercraft but appreciate the point you make. I am afraid that the serious reduction in funding from central government has hugely impacted our budgets as a Council and our ability to do the maintenance on our roads and paths that we would like to do – this is not passing the buck, this is a cold hard reality. The government used to support authorities much more strongly (and fairly) in the past but since 2010 have pursued a policy of reduction in government grants to authorities like us. One important grant, The Revenue Support Grant, has been reduced from over £60 million a year in 2010 to approx. £600k this year and our road network and this reduction contributes to our roads and paths falling further and further into a state of disrepair. What precious funding we do have, we need to spend wisely and on a safety matrix laid out in our Highway Maintenance Plan which adopts the national code of practice advocated by the Department of Transport. . The busiest areas of Leominster town centre are inspected for safety on a monthly basis in line with national best practice. The resulting repairs are aimed at keeping these streets safe. I will provide a full list from the latest safety inspection. What those safety repairs cannot do is address the underlying deterioration in the condition of these streets. It is no surprise that the pavements of Leominster have deteriorated with age, these streets are getting close to the end of their lifecycle. Without a substantial and sustained increase in the funds that we have available to</p>

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	<p>maintain our roads, it will become ever more difficult and costly to make safety repairs.</p> <p>I agree, the problem will not solve itself, we are not ignoring the issue but are working as a Cabinet and with Government departments to identify all available resources (such as the recently secured Heritage Action Zone grant) and focus them in a way that will have the greatest positive impact on the overall condition of our highways, over time.</p> <p>It would help us as a Council and residents of Herefordshire if you could lobby your MP to fight for fairer funding for our county and a return to the funding streams we had prior to 2010 which enabled us to maintain our county infrastructure to a much more satisfactory standard.</p>
<b>Text of Supplementary Question (if any)</b>	<b>Text of Answer to Supplementary</b>



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